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TEN GREAT RELIGIONS:

AN ESSAY IN COMPARATIVE THEOLOGY.

pp. x, 528. 1 vol. 8vo.

Bevelled boards . . . . $3.00.

*** *Sent, post-paid, on receipt of price by the Publishers,*

JAMES R. OSGOOD & CO., Boston.

COMMON-SENSE IN RELIGION:

A SERIES OF

ESSAYS.

BY

JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE.

BOSTON:
JAMES R. OSGOOD AND COMPANY,
LATE TICKNOR & FIELDS, AND FIELDS, OSGOOD, & CO.
1874.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1873,
BY JAMES R. OSGOOD & CO.,
in the Office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington.

University Press: Welch, Bigelow, & Co.,
Cambridge.

PREFACE.

THE aim of this volume is not to give definite theological results, but to suggest a method of inquiry. By common-sense we mean the mode of judgment derived from experience of this world; that is, of God's methods in nature and in human life. A man of common-sense is a man whose intellect is trained by observation of human nature and the course of events. This rule of judgment is derived from observation of the working of God's laws in this world. This method was continually used by Jesus; why should it not be applied more fully by his followers in their studies of religious truth?

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I.

COMMON-SENSE AND MYSTERY.

I.

COMMON-SENSE AND MYSTERY.

In this volume I propose to look at questions of religious truth and religious culture from the point of view of common-sense. I do not undervalue other tests in applying this. What does Scripture say? What does the church say? What does abstract reason say? — these questions are all legitimate. But it may also be well to supplement these with another method of investigation, taken from the common analogies of earthly life. Jesus thanked God that some things, hidden from the wise and prudent, had been revealed to babes. He chose for his disciples, not theologians like Nicodemus or Gamaliel, not men learned in the Scriptures like the scribes, doctors, and lawyers, but men who had only this faculty of common-sense, by which to accept and apply truth. We may thence infer that he did not disapprove of a common-sense view of religion.

Perhaps, however, it may be necessary to indicate a little more plainly what we mean by common-sense in this relation.

Common-sense is not a special power of the human mind, but a method of judgment derived from experience. It consists of those habits of thinking which have resulted from life, and have been verified by life.

Nor by common-sense do I mean the uneducated or miseducated heathen judgment, but the educated Christian judgment. We did not bring into the world our common-sense; we have acquired it here. Common-sense differs in different countries, times, nations, religions, civilizations. The common-sense of a Feejee-Islander teaches him that it is right and natural to eat men and women, a course of action which is revolting to our common-sense. The common-sense of the Middle Ages taught that it was wise and right to burn heretics and witches alive, which our common-sense abhors. What we think a natural and instinctive judgment is often an educated judgment, — the result of opinions which fill the air, which we imbibe in childhood, which saturate literature, which are the commonplaces of conversation, and the staples of public opinion. Our common-sense in America tells us that all the people should vote on great public questions, and elect their own rulers; but two or three hundred years ago the common-sense of Europe affirmed the divine right of

kings to govern, and the duty of subjects to submit and obey.

When, therefore, I speak of common-sense in theology, I mean that part of Christian truth which has been taken up into the average mind of Christendom. I mean those ideas of right and wrong, of God's character and man's duty, into which, by slow and various processes, the Christian world has at last been educated. I mean those great underlying principles of truth which pervade the New Testament, giving it its vital power. When we appeal to this tribunal, we are appealing from the letter of Christianity to its spirit, and from traditional notions to living and working principles and ideas.

Perhaps I may be found fault with for the title given to this book, and it may be said that I ought not to speak of a common-sense view of religion, but rather of a Scripture view or a Christian view. This objection must assume that a Scripture view or a Christian view cannot be a common-sense view. But that I deny. My object is to show that the doctrines taught by Christ and his Apostles are exactly in accordance with common-sense; and if any views are taught by any persons which are not in accordance with common-sense, such views are also opposed to the teaching of Christ.

In this sense, the New Testament is full of common-sense, especially in the Gospels and the teachings of Jesus. Jesus makes all his teaching clear, and fortifies his statements by illustrations drawn from the common life of man. What are the parables but a continual application to the highest truths of the homeliest illustrations? Homely no longer to our minds, perhaps, because glorified by such hallowed associations; but, when first spoken, how familiar they must have seemed! The dough standing to rise in the bread-trough illustrated the silent working of truth in society; the seeds falling on different kinds of soil, the degrees of receptivity of the human soul; the bird, falling dead from the air, the perpetual, universal providence of God; the parent, giving bread to his children at their meals, the influence of the Holy Spirit; the lightning, seen all round the sky at once, the coming of a universal religion: — by such illustrations Jesus perpetually appealed to the common-sense of his hearers in support of his teaching. He also appealed, sometimes, to their Scriptures, and occasionally he met reasoning by reasoning. But most frequently he taught by this reference to common life, so recognizing the analogy between God's laws in nature, in society, and in the soul.

The Christian Church has usually preferred the authority of Scripture to that of common-sense; and would perhaps regard it as below its dignity to follow its Master on this too familiar path. But it may be permitted sometimes to lay aside our scholastic habits, and appeal in religion to the daily business of mankind. This is what we shall attempt here.

We do not claim infallibility for the judgments of common-sense, more than for those of theology in any other form. But they have this advantage, at least, that they embody the general judgment of mankind; they tell us, not what any individual thinks, but what the human race thinks. Every private judgment is partial, more or less one-sided; but, put together the common opinions of educated men, and these partial views neutralize each other, — the plus and minus quantities cancel each other, and the resultant opinion is the *common*-sense of all.

If you could ascertain the real experience of twenty thinking persons upon any question, there would be more common-sense in it than in the opinion of any one of them. But if you could obtain the view of a hundred or a thousand, it would approach still more nearly to the standard of common-sense.

The judgments of common-sense, when once obtained, are irrevocable. It is the great court of final

appeal in human affairs. It moves slowly, but surely, taking no step backward. The inspirations of genius soar higher and go deeper; they reveal to us a glory, a beauty, a truth, which common-sense can never attain to. But they also sometimes dazzle, confuse, mislead; and common-sense can often decide on the truth and falsehood of what it could never originate. Thus, common-sense could never have produced either the plays of Shakespeare or the comments of the critics upon them; but it is quite able to enjoy one and ignore the other. It could not have written Hamlet nor Sir John Oldcastle; but it can decide which is Shakespeare's and which not. By some process of its own it distinguishes between truth and falsehood, right and wrong, good and evil. Error may endure for a night, but common-sense cometh in the morning and sends it away. All sorts of follies may be fashionable for a while; but common-sense arrives at last with its plain judgment, and they come to an end. So, if we could only obtain at once the full verdict of the common-sense of all men on any subject, we should have a very sufficient tribunal. But here lies the difficulty: how are we to get it? One way, and a sure one, is to *wait* — until the world has made up its mind. But, as the world is often very slow in making up its

mind, and sometimes allows generation after generation to die in its error before it finally rejects and condemns the error, we cannot afford to wait.

There is a second method. Democracy, which is based on faith in common-sense, puts everything to the vote, and accepts the judgment of the majority as that of public opinion. And it is so, in the long run; but the majority is often influenced for the time by prejudice, passion, and interest. The majority is often ignorant, and does not care to be enlightened; then it does not represent public opinion, for it does not represent *any* opinion. What is the opinion of the voting majority in New York on public measures? They have none, — they merely vote as they are directed by their leaders. Before the vote of the majority becomes the expression of public opinion, and so of common-sense, it has to be enlightened; and that, again, is a long process.

A shorter way to get at the judgment of common-sense is to obtain the views of those men in whom it is most fully embodied. Some men seem incarnations of the common-sense of the human race,* and hence their perpetual popularity. The Fables of Æsop, the Proverbs of Solomon, are the sense of mankind crystallized into gems which shall forever

* Dr. Franklin, for example.

sparkle on the forefinger of old Time. We can take such judgments and apply them to present affairs. We can test the controverted questions of to-day by the analogy of other questions which common-sense has already decided. These precedents constitute the common law of mankind. We try what is before us by the analogy of experience, which thus obtains (as Milton says) a certain prophetic quality.

Theology has hitherto been held to be outside of this jurisdiction. Theology has been supposed to be a special study, like the higher mathematics, of which the results are to be accepted on the authority of theologians, — just as we accept the conclusions of Laplace, though we cannot understand his processes. Theology has been regarded as a sealed book: the ignorant man must not have an opinion about it, because he is ignorant; the learned man, because it is sealed. However, all this is passing by. Everything to-day is open for examination. Let examination be careful, conscientious, reverential, and no opinions are too sacred to be examined. Truth gains always by such investigation. It is much better for it to rest on conviction than assent. It will not do now to say, "These are mysteries too sacred for examination."

What is a conviction worth which cannot be tested? I think religious people often treat their beliefs as

Don Quixote treated his armor. He first tried it by a good heavy blow of his sword, delivered with his whole strength against his helmet; this blow cut the visor off, and undid in a moment the work of a week. So he mended it, and made it stronger; but concluded not to try it again, but to let it pass for a good, strong helmet without further experiment. So it is with the creeds; people debate them for a while, and then conclude not to try them any more, but to take for granted that they are sound and strong.

I do not know of any opinion so sacred as truth. There is no belief which is too holy to be examined. Let it be examined in a serious and earnest spirit, — but let everything be tested.

But are there not mysteries, it is asked, in religion, which must be believed, though they cannot be understood?

Let us look at this question.

Certainly common-sense tells us that the world is full of mystery.

If we could go out into space, outside the earth's atmosphere, — say a million of miles, — we should find ourselves surrounded by an abyss of darkness; night above, below, around; night everywhere, with its myriad stars. The sun is on one side, burning, an intense globe of light, — too intense to look at, — but

no blue sky, no reflected light, no gradations of sunrise and sunset, of half-seen objects. Nothing is anywhere but the brightest light and the blackest darkness. Such would our life be without mystery. Mystery is the twilight of the intellect; the step out of darkness into light; the half-way house between total ignorance and distinct knowledge. It is what we know in part, what we half see, what we see in a glass, darkly. It is not light; but, like John the Baptist, it is sent to bear witness of the light. It draws our attention from the things which are seen to those which are not seen. It awakens wonder and awe, then curiosity, next inquiry, and so promotes progress. It does not shut the door of thought, but opens it. It does not forbid investigation, but stimulates the mind to inquire.

Take, for example, the mysteries of astronomy. When man first looked at the sun and stars, all was mystery. Their size, their distances, their paths, their substance; it was all wonderful, and all obscure. The wonder excited his mind; curiosity prompted to inquiry. By degrees he learned to know the sublime laws by which planets move along their vast orbits; he learned to measure their motion and calculate their return. He watched the distant comet journeying toward the sun, coming from outer darkness into the

very edge of the solar furnace, and then whirling away again into the cold, void abyss of space. He discovered the far-off planet, — too far to be visible to the eye; discovered it by its influence trembling along the orbits of the other planets nearer the sun, as you detect the approach of a stranger by the changing expression of your friend's face as you talk with him. He learned to analyze the ray of light, coming from the farthest star, and tell what elemental substances are burning there in the fury of that remote flame. So knowledge advances and mystery retires. But as one mystery is explained another mystery appears behind it, to prompt to new inquiry. The universe has not become less an object of awe and wonder because of the progress of science, but more so. First we had wonder alone; then the wonder produced inquiry; inquiry resulted in knowledge; and knowledge excites to greater wonder than before.

And have not the results of the study of geology been the same? Formerly, the earth was supposed to be only six thousand years old, and to have been made in six days. But the mysterious fossil remains and the symmetrical rock strata excited curiosity, led to inquiry, and inquiry to discovery. We see that the earth has passed through a long succession of changes, — has been a mass of liquid fire, of rolling

waters, of continents covered with ice; has been peopled by various strange animals and curious plants; has had its successive faunas and floras. The six thousand years have expanded into millions; the six days of creation have turned into mighty geologic epochs. And what has been the result? Has awe disappeared, has it become less wonderful, because of this enlarged knowledge? No; but far more so. Over this vast creation, stretching through a myriad of years, the morning stars still sing together, and the sons of God still shout for joy. Before, we stood by the side of a little pond, and called it God's universe; now, we sail day after day, over this vast sea of knowledge, but find God's majesty and power and love still expanding around us, on every side, into a limitless ocean.

And so, too, the profounder mysteries of our human life arouse the mind, awaken it to an undying activity, make us look in, look up and around. The great mystery of evil, insoluble though it be, is a door not wholly shut against us, but left a little way open. We ever see good dawning out of evil, evil changing into good, — man going through earthly sorrow into heavenly joy. Thus, we cannot understand why God should permit such horrors as those of the Chicago fire, and the conflagration of woods,

prairies, farms, villages, causing so many families to be driven helpless from their homes. It is a mystery. But we find, coming out of this darkness, some rays of light. We see the whole nation roused to sympathy and generosity; the sufferers showing the noblest courage, patience, faith. Before the fire, the people of Chicago and the people of the Union were not in as high a state of soul as they were after it. So earthly sorrow turns to heavenly joy; as black decaying soil is changed, by the chemistry of nature, into the tender beauty and fragrance of violets and roses.

Deeper than the mystery of pain and sorrow is that of sin. It is the great horror of life, the fatal discord in our world. Man, the highest of all our creation, alone of this creation is capable of sin. The obedient horse and faithful dog cannot sin. They obey always the laws of their being. Man alone, gifted with freedom, is free to do wrong as well as right. Made a little lower than the angels, he can descend much lower than the brutes. But even this mystery is partially resolved by Christianity. Where sin abounds, grace yet more abounds. It is through our sins that we find our way to come most closely to God. No one feels the love of God so much as does the pardoned sinner. As the

alchemy of nature changes death and decay into life and beauty, so the alchemy of Christianity changes sin into repentance and faith. It creates a more profound humility and a more entire trust than anything else can do. Thus, even here, we see that mystery leads to the most profound knowledge, — to the knowledge of God and of ourselves.

All the mysteries spoken of in the New Testament are of this kind. They are secrets, hidden from the foundation of the world, but now partially revealed. They are not sent us to prevent inquiry, but to rouse thought and quicken faith. The chief of these mysteries, to the Jews, was the fact that the Gentiles were allowed to be Christians. To a regular, old-fashioned, conservative Jew, who hated any newfangled notions, it was a great mystery that Seneca or Plato should be allowed to believe in God and be saved. It shocked all his preconceived notions. So, likewise, the resurrection of the dead, in its Christian form, was a mystery. "Behold, I show you a mystery," says Paul; "this corruptible must put on incorruption; this mortal must put on immortality." At death, we do not go down into Hades, but up to God and his angels; that was a mystery revealed, and so taken out of the category of mystery, by revelation.

Ah, that great mystery of death! How silent have all the dear voices become, which lately were music in our ears! Where have those loved ones gone? What are they doing? the fathers and mothers; the wives and husbands; the sweet children; the noble friends, who, a little while ago, told us all that was in their hearts. How deep is the voiceless hush of that world! Why cannot we talk with them across this abyss? Why may not we hear one word to tell us that they love us still? Between us and them there is a great gulf fixed. There are those who believe that spirit voices are heard across it, and I am glad if they get any comfort out of that belief; but these voices do not sound to me much like the voices we used to hear, nor do they tell us a great deal. Their tones are rather unnatural. Only one voice, hitherto, has retained its old tone: the one that said "Mary," in that early twilight; the one that said "Peace be unto you," in that evening meeting; the one that said "Come and dine," on the lake shore of Galilee. But that voice has thrown light into the darkness, and has told us of the many mansions in the house of God, assuring us of a world beyond this world, as good at least as this, as rich in beauty, in action, in thought, and in love.

The error of theologians is to suppose that we ever

can or ought to believe the mysterious part of anything in nature or revelation. The mysterious part is the very part which we do not yet believe. Let me illustrate this.

I am told, let us suppose, to believe the doctrine of the Trinity, or that there are three persons in one God. I ask to have the proposition explained. What is meant by "person"? Am I to understand the term in its usual sense as applied to men? Are the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as distinct from each other as Peter, James, and John? The answer is, "Certainly not; for this would be tritheism. It would be equivalent to a belief in three deities, only morally united." Do you then mean by person only manifestation or personification of the Divine attributes? "Certainly not; for this would be only the heresy of Sabellius." What then do you mean? "We cannot tell. It is a mystery." But to this I rejoin that I am unable to believe any proposition the terms of which are unintelligible. You might as well put, in the place of "person," a Sanskrit or Chinese word, if you are unable to give to it any definite meaning.

"But you believe many things you do not understand. You believe that the grass grows, and you do not understand how it grows." True; and there-

fore I do not believe anything about the "how." I understand the proposition, "The grass grows," and I believe it. I do not understand *how* it grows, and I do not believe anything about it. Where the mystery begins the belief ends.

So as to the union of soul and body. That also is a profound mystery. That the soul and body are united is a plain and intelligible proposition; and we all believe it. *How* they are united is a mystery; and we believe nothing about it. Where the mystery begins the belief ends.

When, therefore, theology offers us as a mystery some unintelligible or contradictory doctrine of its own manufacture, and tells us that these are awful mysteries, and to be accepted as such in spite of all that reason can say against them, we reply, — common-sense replies, — they are not mysteries, they are absurdities. They are not above reason, they are against reason. The mysteries of nature and providence are dawnings of light into darkness. Revelation, too, must be the unveiling of mystery, the revealing of old secrets, not the manufacture of new ones. Revelation, *so far as it is* revelation, is the doing away of mystery. A revealed truth can never be the same as a concealed mystery. *The part which is not yet revealed is the mysterious part,* and to that

part faith does not apply. We have faith in the revelation, not in the mystery. It is, therefore, perfectly true, that where mystery begins revelation and faith in revelation must end. There is mystery in religion, as there is mystery everywhere else. But God never says to man, "This is a mystery; you must accept it blindly, however absurd and false it may seem."

No. But he says, "My child, I do not shut you into a world where everything is perfectly intelligible, where all is on a level with your intellect. Rather, I let you have glimpses of the great beyond. I open to you the portals of far-reaching wonders. I admit you to see the beginnings of majestic laws, which you can partially know, but can never fully comprehend here, whose solution lies further on. I send these visions of superhuman truth, of supernal beauty, that, even in this world, you may walk overshadowed by a higher and diviner world, and so learn that you belong to both. These mysteries come, not to enslave your reason, but to enlarge and emancipate it."

So, even in this world, our coming immortality "broods over us, like the day," and makes our "noisy years seem moments in the being of the eternal silence." We see that we belong to two worlds, —

that of time which we can understand, and that of eternity which we know, though we can never comprehend it.

The mysteries of theology are usually very poor things, very mean and small matters. But God's mysteries are grand and noble. They lift the soul to conceptions of something higher than this world can give. They open the golden gates of the great hereafter; they give us glimpses of the streets of the Eternal City of God, the New Jerusalem, wherein all the beauty and love of this life shall be transfigured into something higher.

"Upon the frontier of this shadowy land
We, pilgrims of eternal sorrow, stand:
What realm lies forward, with its happier store
Of forests green and deep,
Of valleys hushed in sleep,
And lakes most peaceful? 'T is the Land of Evermore!"

II.

COMMON-SENSE VIEW OF HUMAN NATURE.

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Spiritualism and Materialism are the two poles of human thought; and sometimes we begin at one pole, sometimes at the other. Spirit and matter may perhaps be considered as the two manifestations of some one substance, the basis of both. But, at all events, it is as foolish to deny soul in the interest of matter, as to deny matter in the interest of soul. The tendency of thought, at present, is to try to infer soul from body; to deduce knowledge, love, and faith from transformed bodily sensations. This tendency results in a defective psychology, and leads those who are possessed by it to confound distinctions, and thus ends in mental confusion. That there may be a substance underlying *both* body and soul is not unlikely. But to try to infer thought from sensation leads to a waste of time, paper, and printer's-ink, with only small results.

What do we know of matter? Only this, that it is that something which is perceived through the senses.

What do we know of mind? Only this, that it is that something which is *not* perceived through the senses, but through consciousness. Whatever else we may know, or not know, concerning mind and matter, we know at least this, that they are different in this respect. What we perceive through the senses is matter; what we perceive by means of consciousness is mind.

The tendency to identify mind with matter is likely to be temporary, and does not belong to true science. Science observes all facts, mental no less than physical. And as thought, love, faith are facts just as real and certain as color, weight, and form, science cannot afford to ignore either, or to merge one in the other.

Of these two orders of phenomena, certainly the thought-side of man is the most important. This is what chiefly distinguishes man from other animals; this constitutes the humanity in him. Through the body he stands related to other animals; but by certain phenomena of mind he stands apart from them, and walks alone. Whether he has ascended from a mollusk, or not, is of less importance than to see what he is now. And this is what we propose to inquire. Let us begin with the soul in man; and then we may go on to consider wherein the human

soul differs from that of animals, and wherein consists the dignity of human nature, as taught by Christianity and by common-sense.

The first point is to say what we mean by the soul. Let us define it thus. The soul is the principle of life, vegetative, animal, mental, and moral.*

This definition has the advantage of being perfectly intelligible, simple, and incontrovertible. Every one knows the difference between a living and an inanimate being. In all living organizations there must be some principle which constitutes life, — the basis of life. This is not located in the physical part which we call the body, which can be seen and analyzed by the senses; for all physical organs may exist the moment after death. Something has gone; but no science founded on sense can tell what is gone. So no physical science can tell what is the principle of life in a seed which may continue, without change, three thousand years, and then begin to grow. Life, therefore, is something, and something metaphysical; that is, beyond the reach of physics. This principle of life we call the soul.

Remembering our definition of matter, namely, as

* In this definition we follow the Greek and Latin meaning of the soul. *Psyche* in the Greek means soul and life; *anima* in the Latin means soul and also life.

something which is perceived through the senses, we may say that every *organized body* has its identity in an immaterial principle, and not in a material one. You have the same body now that you had ten years ago, but not a single particle of matter in it now was there ten years since. If the molecules of carbon, oxygen, hydrogen, and phosphorus in your body constitute its identity, then, when they are removed and replaced by others, you will have a different body. These have all gone in seven years ; but you have the same body as before, the same form, the same complexion, the same expression of eye, the same tone of voice, the same habits, physical, intellectual, and moral. That sameness, then, that identity, by which the friend who knew you ten years ago recognizes you as the same person to-day, does not lie in the material, but the immaterial part of you. The material atoms have been flowing through you like a river; but *you* have remained the same all the time. Does not this show that Spenser the poet was right when he said, —

> "For of the soul the body form doth take ;
> For soul is form, and doth the body make" ?

The unity and identity of every organized body must have their root in something beside the material particles of which it consists.

Again, the soul is a unit. The evidence of this is, that it gives unity to the body. Every living thing, from a fungus up to man, is made a unit by this invisible principle which collects and arranges in one organic whole the particles of oxygen, hydrogen, and carbon fetched from the earth and air. All that chemical analysis can find in a tree, a fish, or a man is carbon, phosphorous, oxygen, etc., in certain proportions. But what combines these into the special tree? what correlates them into the special forms of root, trunk, bark, leaves, buds, flowers, fruit, seed, and continues to reproduce these year after year, century after century? There is something there which gives this unity, — a persistent unity; and that something we call its soul. But it is of little consequence what we call it. Call it its monad or its molecule, if you will. It is a principle of unity, and so is immaterial.

There are two ways by which we become acquainted with the soul: from without, by observation; from within, by consciousness.

By observation of animated beings we see that in addition to sensible qualities, as solidity, extension, form, they have other qualities, as growth or development, active influence on external things to modify them, sensation, desire, thought, will. We perceive

these qualities manifested in living creatures, and we do not see them in any inanimate things.

By consciousness, we find in ourselves a certain unit or principle of identity, which we call *I*, as when we say "I feel," "I think," "I wish," "I go," "I went to such a place a year ago," "I intend to study such a book a year hence." We are conscious that this *ego* is one and the same unit amid all this variety of active and possible life. If we know anything, we know this thing which loves, hates, thinks, chooses; and this is our soul, or the central principle of animal, intellectual, and moral life. Of animal life, because it feels bodily pain or pleasure, and acts through all the senses. We do not say my body sees or my nose smells; but we say *I* see, *I* taste; just as we say *I* think, *I* love. The soul is that in which all the functions of bodily intellectual and moral life inhere and find their unity.

Again, we know the soul to be finite and limited. We are conscious of limitation. But then we also know the soul, within these limitations, to be free; that is, to have a self-originated movement, and a power of choice between opposites; to be a cause as well as an effect. Of the limitations of this freedom we shall speak hereafter.

Again, we know, as we have intimated, that soul

is immaterial. All that we know of matter is through its phenomena; which are solidity, extension, form, color, etc., none of which belong to the soul. The qualities of matter are exactly those which soul does not possess; the qualities of soul are exactly such as matter does not possess. Matter is hard, soft; white, black; long, short; square, round; heavy, light; fragrant, inodorous. The soul has none of these qualities, but has the quality of feeling, perceiving, tasting, touching, loving, hating, reasoning.

If any one, therefore, asks, "How do we know that we have a soul?" the answer is, "Exactly as we know that we have a body." How do I know that I have a body? Because I perceive through my senses certain bodily phenomena, as resistance, color, form; and by a law of my mind, an instinctive and involuntary act of reason, *infer a substance in which these qualities inhere, and call it body.* So I perceive through my consciousness certain mental, or rather psychical phenomena, as sensation, perception, thought, love, pleasure, desire, memory, hope, determination; and by a law of my mind, equally instinctive and involuntary, *infer a substance in which these phenomena inhere, which I call my soul.*

Matter is essentially passive, soul essentially active. Soul imprisoned in matter acts as far as this

allows it to act. The soul of a tree can only make it grow; it cannot move to and fro. The soul of a star-fish or an oyster can only cause it to move about a little; the soul of a dog can reason a little, and love a good deal; the soul of a man, by means perhaps of a higher bodily development, having more lobes to the brain, can also see abstract truth, choose absolute right, look up to a perfect God, anticipate an infinite future and an eternal progress. It can reflect on itself, become conscious of its own character, deliberately choose an aim in life, plan out its scheme of existence, and pursue it year after year. It can form and build up character, and so improve indefinitely.

Thus the soul is dependent on the body, not only for the means of exercising its present faculties, but also of unfolding new ones. If the soul's body is provided with few and poor organs, the soul is much hampered. When the body is weak, sick, injured, the soul becomes helpless. But this does not prove the soul to be the result of body; it only proves body to be the necessary condition of the soul's activity and development. An organist, without his organ, cannot produce any music. When his organ is out of tune, his music is poor. But we do not argue from this that the organist is the result of the organ. We

do not say that Beethoven is the final product of transformed vibrations of metal and wood. We happen to know that there is a musician, and so we accept him as a fact. Otherwise our acute sensational philosophers would no doubt be able to derive him from habits and associations of bellows, keys, and pipes.

Man, then, is both body and soul; but these agree in this, that both are finite, and come under limitations of space and time. Man's soul is, through the body, limited to one place; and to one moment of duration. But there is in him something unlimited, bound to neither time nor place, and this must be the power of the Infinite Being within him. He must be able to commune with God; in no other way could he be emancipated from time and space. In the great moments of devotion, of self-sacrifice, of love, of humility, who thinks of time and space? Then arises the sense of immortality within us. We feel ourselves immortal only as we commune with infinite and eternal ideas.

Transcendentalism is right in allying man thus intimately and naturally with God, but wrong in identifying him with God. Man in himself is not infinite, but finite; yet he has a part of his soul open to the infinite, and so God can come and dwell with him, and he can see God.

This trichotomy or threefold division of the nature of man into spirit, soul, and body, was well known to the ancients. Paul and Plato both held to it, and in modern times it has been revived by various thinkers. It explains many facts better than the simpler division. The man in whom spirit is supreme is the religious man. If spirit is active, but soul depressed, then he is more religious than moral. If soul is active and spirit depressed, than he is more moral than religious. If body is supreme, then he is carnal, or sensual. When Paul says "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God," he refers to the soul-man, the psychical man, not to the carnal man.

The Apostle Paul, in his first letter to the church in Thessalonica, says, "I pray God that your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless to the coming of our Lord Jesus." His idea is that we cannot be blameless, or pure, without becoming wholly pure.*

* In his description of the resurrection (or ascent) of the body, the apostle distinguishes the present body from the future, by calling the first the "soul-body" and the other the "spirit-body." In 1 Cor. xv. 44–46 we should read, "It is sown a soul-body, it is raised a spirit-body. There is a soul-body, and there is a spirit-body. . . . . The soul-body comes first, the spirit-body succeeds to it." This is what is meant by the resurrection of the

The apostle is not satisfied with saving a part of us, he does not mean merely to save our souls; he wishes to save the whole man; spirit, soul, and body. He believes the body salvable as well as the soul. He anticipates our modern educational theories about physical training and physical culture. At all events, he lays down the principle out of which such theories may grow. He goes further: he is not satisfied with saving soul and body, but wishes to save the spirit also. According to his notion of human nature, man is not only a body, as the minerals are; has not only a body and soul, as the plants and animals have; but besides this has a spirit, that is, divine consciousness. Man is in sympathy with all outward nature through his body; with all earthly life through his soul; and with the infinite and eternal world through his spirit. Thus man is what the ancients called a Microcosm, or little world, corresponding to the Macrocosm, or universe. The universe has also three kingdoms: God, who is the active Creator from whom all power, change, progress, evermore proceeds; nature, the pas-

body. It is a higher bodily development, by which the human being ascends into a higher outward organization.

The word ψυχή (Psyche) occurs in the New Testament about one hundred and five times. It is translated "soul" fifty-eight times, "life" about forty-three times, "mind" three times, "heart" and "heartily" twice.

sive recipient, which is moved and led by God; and the intermediate realm of souls, which partake in part of God's creative force, and are partly acted on by external influences. Now man is all three: he is the temple of God by his spirit, and is God's child, receptive of God's life; he is a living soul, independent, free, and with a special individuality and personality of his own; and he is also body, immersed in bodily conditions, rooted in earth, planted in time and space, and feeding on nature through his senses.

What, then, are the religious elements in the Soul qualifying man to be a religious being?

According to our definition of spirit, the strictly religious part of man is the Spirit; because that alone can deal with the Infinite. But we yet say that the Soul has certain aspirations toward the Infinite, and certain functions by which it feels after it; and the phrenologists may be right in giving even religious organs to the body. So that we can say, when a man is in a state of spiritual activity, looking toward God, he is communing with God, and has risen out of body and out of soul into spirit, and his will disappears in God's will. Then he acts from God, and his will acts in reverence, worship, love, self-surrender. He is then a medium through which God's life flows into the world. When it is said that Jesus was

always in the bosom of the Father, it means that he was always in this state.

Beside the spiritual power in man, by which he can commune with the Infinite and the Eternal, there are other religious functions of his nature, of which we will mention the following: —

Reverence, or Veneration. This is that tendency of the soul by which it looks up to something higher than itself. It is the faculty of aspiration. Shakespeare says of it, —

> "Reverence,
> That angel of the world, that makes distinction
> Of place 'twixt high and low."

This faculty leads to worship and adoration, gives delight in acts of external homage, founds churches, builds cathedrals, enjoys solemn rites and holy ceremonies. When unregulated by reason, it becomes superstition, and leads to bigotry, intolerance, and persecution. But in its due exercise it is "the crown of the whole moral nature," and helps man to rise above himself. It gives harmony to his being, and a certain angelic charm to life.

Conscience. This is that faculty or function of the soul by which it perceives right as right; by which it has the conviction of justice, obligation, duty, absolute law. Conscience does not teach us *what*

is right, only that something is right. It gives the sense of merit in doing what we believe to be right, of remorse when we do what we believe to be wrong. It is not a code of ethics, or a moral law. We must find out what is right by reason, and by observing what is, in the long run, good and useful. But the sense of right itself is not the same as the sense of the useful. Regret and remorse are two wholly different conditions of mind. When we have established in our mind a principle of right, it is dictatorial. It is the categorical imperative. It says, "Obey me, though the heavens fall." A principle of duty is one thing, a calculation of expediency a very different thing. Conscience is a religious faculty, because of this very absolute and commanding character of its decisions. It is the voice of God within us.

Freedom. The power of free choice is another religious faculty in man. It is freedom to choose, not necessarily freedom to do. Man stands between opposite motives; conflicting arguments, drawn this way and that way by external influences and internal desires. But besides these motives and influences which come to him from without, he has the power of leaning one way or the other by his own choice. Of this he is himself conscious, and without this

consciousness of freedom there could be no sense of responsibility. It is easy, no doubt, to demonstrate logically that man must always yield to the strongest motive. But after the demonstration, as before, we still know that it is not so. We cannot reply to the argument, but we are never convinced by it. Man is a force, limited by body, by the conditions of time and sense. But he is still a force, essentially active, a creative power in the universe, and so allied to God, the Infinite Creator.

Reason. By reason we mean not merely the power which compares, infers, and deduces consequences from causes, but we mean that higher act of human intelligence by which the soul perceives ideas, or absolute laws. This is the faculty which sees abstract and general truth. By this insight man's freedom becomes really freedom. He can determine his course by everlasting ideas, and so gradually emancipate himself from the dominion of circumstances and external limitations.

Such are some of the religious elements in the human soul. These are natural to man, born in all men. Some have more of one or of the other tendency, but all men have, in a greater or less degree, all of these powers. By means of these man is capable of rising above himself, of going forward in

an everlasting progress, upward and onward. Because of his possession of these powers we may say of him that he is "little lower than the angels."

There are two schools of thought which take a different view of man. The old Orthodox theology, instead of putting man with angels, puts him with devils; and modern science, instead of putting him with angels, often puts him with apes. The one looks at man only on his sinful side, the other only on his animal side.

Now it is true that man, when he sins, does degrade himself below the cattle, and goes down among the devils. There is a possibility, in every man, of fiendish cruelty, of diabolic treachery, of hard selfishness, to which if we apply the word "brutal" we shall do injustice to the brutes. No lion or tiger ever tormented its victims as an inquisitor tortures a conscientious heretic, or as a slaveholder tortures a conscientious slave. No swine were ever so steeped in sensuality as some men are who call themselves men of pleasure. No fox or snake ever deceived and lied as some people deceive and lie in the business streets of Boston or New York. And, no doubt, on the bodily side of him, man is an animal. There is, no doubt, a plan of the skeleton, the muscles, the nerves, which we share with lower creatures. We need not

be ashamed of these poor relations of ours. They are also souls, imprisoned in lower forms of body, which perhaps may one day come up, and be developed into a higher type, and become in time free and responsible beings like ourselves. They are God's creatures as truly as we are; and so they are our fellow-creatures.

Still, when we say that man is a higher kind of devil, or a higher kind of ape, we do not tell the truth about him. He belongs to an essentially different world and type. He belongs by nature to the human order, not the monkey order or the diabolic order. He may have been a monkey, and he can become a devil; but as a man, he is neither one nor the other: as a man, he is "made a little lower than the angels, and crowned with glory and honor."

God has made a great gulf between man and the highest animals, and another between man and the highest devils. The gulf between man and the most advanced animals is, at present, impassable. It consists in man's gift of language, his power of progress, his knowledge of abstract and universal truths, and his faculty of free choice. In all these things man is far above the animals.

No animal has verbal language; all men have. Animals and men both express their feelings by cries;

but a word is essentially distinct from a cry. Articulate speech is so marvellous a thing, that the traditions of all nations have called it a gift of the gods. There is something amazing, almost miraculous, in two persons speaking together, — the thought descending out of the mind of the first into words, and going across on an airy bridge of sound to the other, then ascending again out of the word into the mind of the second! If an animal could talk, it would cease to be an animal, and become a man. But though the lowest Hottentot can be taught any language of man, the highest animal cannot.

So, again, man has the power of progress, animals have not. They can learn tricks, they can be taught to imitate, but they do not advance. Animals and men can be gradually improved; the races of men and animals can meliorate or degenerate. But man can propose to himself an aim, and go toward it. Man can say, "I will learn Latin," and can learn it; "I will become a merchant or a lawyer," and become one. There is nothing in the whole animal kingdom like that. Higher still, he can say, "I will become a good man, I will become a Christian," and can become so.

No animal has ever been known to make and use tools. A baboon will find a stick, and use it as a

club, but he cannot make a club. Birds build their nests with wonderful ingenuity, but they do it with the tools given them by God, with beak and claw. But man, beginning with the stone hatchets and flint arrow-heads of the savage, goes on till he reaches the wonderful machinery by which he can cut in two an iron bar with his shears as though it were a piece of paper, plane an iron log as though it were a pine board, lay a cable under the ocean, hang a bridge over Niagara, put a tunnel two miles long under a lake. This is another gulf fixed between animals and man. All men can use tools; animals cannot.

It is certain that the power of using tools is a characteristic of mankind. The mere presence of rude stone hammers or hatchets in some geological strata, where no other evidence of man's existence can be found, is now reckoned by geologists and anthropologists as sufficient proof that human beings have lived in that period. These stone implements, so clumsy as to be with difficulty regarded as works of art, have been considered enough to give a name to the "Stone Age." In 1847 Boucher des Perthes published his book, *Antiquités Celtiques*, in which he gives an account of some stone hatchets and arrow-heads found in the diluvium, from which he inferred the existence of men at the period repre-

sented by that drift. Opposed at first, this view is now generally received by men of science. It was opposed on many grounds, and for a long time, but no man of science opposed it on the ground that these tools, though of the rudest character, *might have been the work of animals.*

Again, no animal has the knowledge of universal truths. Man not only knows that some things are good, but he knows there is such a thing as goodness; he not only knows that there are true things, but he knows there is such a thing as truth; he not only knows that this particular event has a cause, but that all events have causes. You may say, "How do we know that animals have not these ideas?" I answer, that it is by being able to ascend out of the fact into the law that man obtains the mastery over creation, and if animals could do it, they could not have been subdued by man. It is by seeing a law as well as a fact, that man is able to foresee, and so can arrange beforehand. This power gives him dominion over nature, and over animals as a part of nature. God has put all things under his feet, by giving him the power of rising out of the single fact into the universal law. The result of all is, that at last we reach the knowledge of the most universal law, the Infinite Cause, and so know God.

All men, as soon as they begin to be cultivated, have general ideas. They have an idea of beauty, apart from any particular beautiful thing; an idea of universal cause, apart from any particular cause. So, too, of power, law, substance, attribute, right and wrong, good and evil, time and space. Man, by reason, is capable of general notions. We do not find in animals any such reason. See, now, what this power of generalization does for man. It furnishes him with rules, laws, principles. It gives him the power of self-direction toward an aim. These general ideas, these abstractions of reason, preside over all of human life. The most uneducated man will say, "I have a notion that I had better do this, that I ought to do that." Then he rises out of the region of facts into that of law. Facts change; laws endure. This gives persistency of aim to our life; this is the key of progress and civilization.

Man's freedom also connects him with angels on one side and demons on the other. We may believe in a rational way in demons as well as angels, because we must believe in the freedom of moral beings. Whoever is free to choose may choose evil as well as good. An angel is one who has chosen good; a devil, one who has chosen evil. Animals are too far down to be able to choose either; they can, therefore,

neither become angels nor devils. Angels and devils are both recruited from the ranks of men.

We do not know how far this freedom to choose evil may go, and cannot venture to conjecture. We know that in this world men do sometimes blind their minds and harden their hearts, and go resolutely on the downward way, till they disappear from our eyes in death. How much farther they can go in that direction we do not know. I am one of those who believe that in the great order of the universe all disorders shall at last be swallowed up, and every knee bow to God in submission and love. This seems to me a necessary inference from monotheism. But I do not know when. I cannot say how many at this moment may be pursuing evil, in the vast spaces of creation, nor how far they may go in that direction. It is probable that the Pharisees in the time of Jesus, who sinned against the Holy Ghost by closing their ears and eyes against his goodness and truth, were in this diabolic state. And just so are all those now who do the same. But as long as the *love of truth* exists in the soul, as long as one does not deny that right is right, and that goodness is goodness; so long, though there may be much evil and sin in the character, there is nothing of the devil in it. The face is turned toward good, and not toward evil; and though bound per-

haps by sin, we do not yield ourselves to sin willingly, and so are not servants of sin, but servants of God.

Thus we see that there is at present a very distinct line of separation between the soul of man and the soul of the highest animals. The animal has affection, intelligence, and will, and so has, in common with man, the three chief elements of soul. But while all men have verbal language, use tools, and possess the power of progress toward an aim, animals are wanting in all these characters. Two great thinkers, differing from each other on many points, — Locke and Leibnitz, — have agreed in finding the root of all these differences in man's capacity for general ideas. Man is superior to the dog and beaver, because he can not only become aware of good actions and good men, but of goodness; not only of right and wrong deeds, but of justice; not only of cause and being, but of an absolute First Cause, of an infinite and perfect Being. His power of progress comes greatly from this. He is capable of looking in and looking up; of seeing things which are invisible, of emancipating himself from space and time, of laying hold of an idea. It is this which gives real dignity to human nature. It is this power of connecting himself spiritually with something infinite and perfect which lifts man above the beasts, and makes

him capable, not merely of a continued future existence, but of a present immortal life.

That every one of us may have been at one time an oyster or a monkey I do not deny. I know nothing about it, so I cannot deny it. But that we are not oysters and monkeys now, but men, and that man is separated by an immense distinction from all other animal races, — this is something which I think we do know. And this I think Jesus believed, too. He spake not only of himself, but of humanity, when he declared, "One stands here greater than the Temple."

No doubt this seemed to the Jews an audacious thing to say. Man makes institutions, and then bows before the work of his hands. He considers the institution greater than himself. So he becomes an idolater. He worships nature, sun, moon, and stars. He worships heroes, Theseus, Hercules, Thor, Odin. He worships churches, books, days, ceremonies. He thinks them all greater than himself, though he is infinite, they only finite.

Jesus reversed all this. He reverenced humanity. The priests thought the Sabbath greater than man, and would not have the Sabbath broken to have a man healed. But Jesus said that the Sabbath was made for man, and therefore healed on the Sabbath day.

Little children have always been too much neglected or despised, and only the unconquerable instinct of the father and mother has protected them at all. Down to the time of Christ they were shielded by this instinct, rather than by any conviction. Then and since, and even now, they have been guided, mainly, as we guide a drove of cattle. They have been driven, not led; kept in order by scolding; suffered to die for want of food and care; suffered to grow up into all wickedness for want of instruction. Jesus came and took them in his arms, and blessed them. He saw in the child the guarantee of human improvement. He saw in its innocent, unperverted nature the only probable capacity for his religion. These were to be the citizens of his commonwealth; "of such," said he, "are the kingdom of heaven."

And so, since that day, the value of a child's soul has begun to be recognized, and the fact seen, that all human progress depends on the care paid to the rising generation. So schools and homes improve. When I was a boy, and went to the Boston Latin School, it was the custom to inflict perhaps half a dozen whippings a day, in each room. A boy who talked was whipped. A boy who did not say his lesson was whipped. A boy who came late was whipped. Now, in that, and all our schools, things

go much better; and in some places they have even reached the point in which the beating of girls is wholly abolished. Perhaps in some distant future we may leave off beating boys also.

The worst thing about the system of slavery was, not that men and women were beat, and bought and sold, but the evil was that they were considered as means, not ends; things, not souls. They were regarded as tools for raising cotton and sugar; rice-raising machines, hemp-raising machines. If, standing by a cotton-field, you had said to the planter, "This negro who stands here is greater than the cotton," he would have been as much surprised as the Jews were when Jesus said that he, the Son of Man, "was greater than the Temple." And the best thing about the abolition of slavery is, that now the negro begins to be regarded as here for his own sake, not for ours. Now he has an intellect to be instructed, and we send him teachers; now he has a soul to be saved, and we send him missionaries and the Bible.

We are still too much in the habit of looking on men as masses, not as individuals. We talk of the working classes, the lower classes. The result of this way of looking at them is to be seen in New York and other places. The people who have knowledge,

wealth, culture, have devoted themselves to their own affairs, and neglected the good of the whole community; and now, because they neglected the lower classes, they are governed by the lower classes.

Jesus has also taught us to see in the criminal a man, having in him, after all, something greater than the social laws he has broken. The old way of treating criminals was to punish them, and if that did not do, punish them more severely. But it was seen, at last, that punishment and crime went hand in hand, increasing in the same ratio. In my childhood a hanging was a great festival; as much so as Thanksgiving Day or the Fourth of July. Men and women with their little children came from far and near to see a man choked to death. This was brutalizing; and so the result was not the diminution of crime, but its increase. But as soon as we begin to treat the criminal as a man, and his crime as a disease caught in the contagious atmosphere of city debauchery; so soon as we consider crime the dark, consummate fruit of which vice is the blossom and ignorance the stalk; so soon as we turn our prisons into reformatories and hospitals to cure the criminal, — just so soon does crime diminish. Every reformed drunkard is the best preacher of temperance, every reformed criminal the best teacher of morality. The old pris-

ons had only one method of treating criminals, and that was to punish them. Modern prisons reward them for their efforts to do right, and stimulate them to do better by gradually removing restraints and lightening labor, till at last the reformed criminal goes out with a good character which he has formed in jail, and which is a passport to work and opportunity.

If you strike an artesian well down through human society, you pass through many strata. First, there is the stratum of respectability, of refinement and culture. Then comes the stratum of comfort, morality, and decorum; then that of mere work, intelligent but incessant toil; then the stratum of ignorance and indolence; then of poverty; then of vice; then of crime. But go down deeper still, and you come to the stratum of primitive rock, which lies below the valley, and crops up at the summit of the mountain, the eternal humanity which is in all men.

That primeval nature supports everything, overlooks everything. That contains the seeds of good and evil: the undying sense of right out of which all good is unfolded; the selfishness out of which all vice and crime come. That is in us all. We are members of a great body. We belong to the same family. When we see this, we are able to sympathize with

all men, even the lowest and worst; for they all have one common nature. Man is the greatest thing we see or hear. The sun shall fade, the stars grow dim, the heaven and the earth pass away as a scroll that is rolled together; but the soul of man, with its good and evil, its vast aspirations, its undying capacities, its power to act and to suffer, its ability to do heroic deeds and to love God and man, — this shall endure in all time.

III.

ON THE DOCTRINE CONCERNING GOD.

III.

GOD.

SOME idea of God lies at the root of all religion; the true idea of God lies at the root of true religion. Until some idea of God enters the mind, religion is impossible. It is a confusion of terms to define religion as a longing after the Infinite, or as an attempt at self-development, or as the sense of obligation, or the like. Worship, in its lower forms, may exist without any notion of God. Shakespeare has typified this in Caliban's worship of the drunken sailor. Virtue may exist without the idea of God; for the basis of virtue is the sense of duty, the idea of right and wrong. But religion is the sense of our relation to supernatural personal beings, or to a supernatural being. As supernatural, he is above outward nature, having a control over it; and as a person, we can come into personal relations with him. This being is God.

How do we define God? Have we any means by which to define the true God? Suppose we were living five hundred years before Christ. Every race,

every nation, has its own god. Which is the true God, the Supreme Being? The Greeks say Zeus; he is the father of gods and men. The Persians say Ormazd; he is the supreme light, king of day and of truth. The Egyptians say Amun, infinite spirit. The Jews say Jahveh; he made the heavens; the gods of the nations are idols.

How should we be able to decide between these national deities, and find the true God?

First, we should set aside the *name*, and say, "The name is nothing; it is the true character which makes the true God. That which is most divine is God." And we have in ourselves the idea of perfection, which is the test of divinity. The true God is the most perfect being, the being who unites all perfections, the being in whom all the highest attributes centre. The definition of God is The perfect Being.

There are many imperfect beings, as imperfection is finite. There can be but one perfect being, for perfection is infinite. If, then, there is a perfect God, he is one; and if God be one, he is perfect.

Therefore God is the being in whom all perfections centre. He is the fulness which fills all in all. The more we add of what is real and good to our idea of God, the nearer we come to the true God. This is why the Christian conception of God has expelled all

others, and is accepted by the best thought of the world. It is because it is the highest conception.

To use the right *name* for God does not make true belief. Here are two men: one a professed Christian, the other a professed Pagan. The professed Christian is St. Dominic, the founder of the Inquisition; the professed Pagan is the Roman Emperor, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus. The professed Christian has for his God a being whom he believes jealous and arbitrary. He believes that his God is pleased in seeing men and women tortured and burned alive, because they are heretics to the right creed. The Pagan worships a being wise, mighty, and good, maker and supporter of all things, who loves virtue in all men, and rewards it everywhere. Now the Christian, worshipping in name the true God, worships in reality the false one; and the Pagan, worshipping in name Jupiter, worships in reality the God and Father of Jesus Christ.

Which of these two breaks the first commandment? Is it he who gives the right name to God, but worships under that name tyranny and cruelty, or he who, under the wrong name, worships wisdom and goodness? Yet most men judge so by the name, by the outward appearance, that they would consider the man who says in his prayer, "O Lord!" to be wor-

shipping the true God; while the man who says "O Zeus! O Jupiter!" must necessarily be worshipping the false god.

It is not using the right name, but accepting the right being, the right character, which constitutes the belief of the true God.

It may also happen that two men shall profess the same religion, hold the same Bible, and call God by the same name, but one of them shall be a believer in the true God, and one not; one shall keep the first commandment, and the other break it. For one may pray in this way, "O Lord! I pray thee to save my soul. I know thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strewed; and so, though thou hast made me so that I am born totally depraved, and unable to do any good thing, thou dost require of me to obey and love thee. I am made wholly selfish and an enemy to thee, and am unable to love anything truly; but I admit I ought to love thee notwithstanding. I do not see how I am guilty in doing wrong, when I cannot do right; but I am told that I ought to confess myself a sinner, and so I do; I confess myself to be the vilest of sinners. Thou hast said that the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon *him*, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be on *him;* and yet I

hope to be saved, not by my merits, or by becoming good myself, but by the merits and goodness of Jesus Christ. Amen." Now that is one prayer. Here is another, uttered perhaps by a poor ignorant slave, who has never been allowed to read the Bible, and whose theological notions are therefore very simple and childlike.

"O Lord! I do not know thee very well, but I believe that thou art a good master, and I want to be a good servant. O master, show me how to do right. Help me, O Lord, to-day, not to be angry nor idle, not to tell any lies, but to be faithful in everything. If I am beaten or ill used unjustly, help me to bear it, as the good Master Jesus bore it patiently when they beat him. Amen."

Now these two both say "O Lord!" but they are evidently not worshipping the same being.

In fact, so far is the name which we worship from being essential, that the most religious nations have hesitated to give any name to God. In fact, we do not know now how to pronounce the name of the God of the Jews. The true pronunciation of the word "Jahveh," or "Jehovah," has been wholly lost; for the Jews carefully avoided every mention of it, and substituted for it any other word written with the same vowels. They were so afraid of taking the name of

the Lord in vain, that they did not venture to utter it at all. The Rabbins call it "the Name," "the Name of four letters," "the separate Name." The knowledge of the name was a great secret, possessed by few; and the last man who knew it is said to have been Simon the Just. God revealed himself to Moses as "*The I am*," as Essential Being. He revealed himself to the Jews by his law, and they knew him when they knew that; in the mingled justice and mercy of the law, in its demand for purity. Jesus says, "They who worship God must worship him in spirit and in truth." It is not the name we give to God, but the idea we have of him, which determines whether or not we worship him in truth. It is not the outward form of worship which we practice, but the inward devotion, the reality of love, which determines whether or not we worship him in spirit.

Many worship God, but worship something else more. Then they have some other god before the true God.

Thus, many persons go to church, and say their prayers, and call God "Our Father in heaven," but their real god is not a Father. Their real god is an almighty power. He is an inflexible will. He is one who acts, not according to wisdom and love, as a

good father acts, but according to some personal whim of his own. He has his favorites, whom he elects and chooses to make happy forever. He has those whom he dislikes for no reason except that he has taken a prejudice against them, and so rejects them and sends them to perdition. This is the essential idea of Calvinism according to Calvin; and Calvinism has another god before the God of Jesus Christ. Jesus worshipped a Father; Calvinism worships an infinite, arbitrary will.

Mr. Froude, who is one of the chief sceptics in England, and does not believe at all in Christianity, has recently expressed a great faith in Calvinism. So extremes meet. He, however, rehabilitates Calvinism by making it something else than it really is. He makes it mean faith in law, whereas it means faith in an almighty, arbitrary will. But arbitrary will is despotism, not government. It produces not a generous, intelligent obedience, but only a slavish submission. The worship of such a being is not perfect freedom, but cowardly subservience. Calvinism puts another god before God.

Some people go to the other extreme, and put law above God. The personal God, the Friend, the Father, disappears behind a misty veil of law. It is undeniably true that God works by law. He

maintains a great order in the universe, and we sleep and rise trusting to this order, and sure that no caprice of will in the Almighty will ever change it. But, beside Law, God is also Providence. He is an infinite person; infinite in power, wisdom, and love. He is guiding events onward and forward. The universe is not a dead machine, clattering on without object or purpose. Everywhere God's face looks upon us out of creation, and his voice speaks to our heart, telling us to fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life, and not to doubt that all things shall work together at last for good to those who love him. God, as a person, is Infinite Freedom. But this infinite freedom is not wilfulness, for it is associated with infinite wisdom in a perfect order, toward infinite good, in perfect love.

Others, again, put the Devil above God. They do not consciously worship the Devil, but they make God so much like the Devil, that it comes to the same thing. Those who believe that God has made more evil than good in the world; who believe that human beings are made radically bad and not good; who think all are by nature evil, and only a few, who are converted and belong to the true church, are really good,— these make evil and not good supreme in the world. Total and natural depravity here, and an

eternal hell hereafter, enthrone the Devil as the supreme ruler of a large part of the universe, and only allow God to be sovereign over a few sound believers here and there. All such doctrines, therefore, as far as they are really believed, put another god above the true God.

To believe in God is to believe in truth, justice, purity, generosity, above everything else. John says, "He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God; for God is love." He does not say, "He who dwelleth in an Orthodox creed dwelleth in God; for God is a creed." He does not say, "He who dwelleth in sacraments, rituals, ceremonies, dwelleth in God; for God is a ceremony." He does not say, "He who dwelleth in respectabilities and decencies dwelleth in God; for God is respectability." Nor, "He who dwelleth in feeling and emotion dwelleth in God; for God is emotion." No; LOVE is something higher than emotion, ritual, creed, decency; it is the soul going out of itself in generosity, giving itself to truth and duty, living for these. "Blessed are the pure in heart; they shall see God."

I think that we believe in God when we believe in that which is divine in all things; when we see in men something divine and noble in the midst of all that is evil; when we see in childhood something

divine, and revere the innocence yet unstained by the world. So, too, we believe in God when we love our friends, not because they are of use to us, not because our tastes and theirs happen to agree just now, but because we see and admire in them some innate beauty which God stamps on each soul when he makes it; some connate and inborn charm of spontaneous sweetness, or courage, or honor, or aspiration, or reverence, or humility, or conscience, which God gave them in his counsel before the foundation of the world. And we see God when we love all his creatures, whether they are sympathetic with us or antipathetic, when we overlook their faults and pardon their offences, and care for their souls, as God and Christ care for their souls. This is divine love, true love, which sees God; which whosoever has dwells in God and God in him. He may have many faults, vices, follies, sins, but this generosity in his heart is the redeeming element; this is Christ born within him, the hope of glory; this gives him a solid inward peace and satisfaction, and makes him assured and confident before God.

Obedience leads to love, and love to right. By doing right we come to love right. We may not love it at first as much as wrong, but as we continue to do it, we grow to love it. Better one act of obedience than many words of praise and prayer.

Let us consider what our Saviour said of the two servants, one of whom said "I go," and went not; while the other said "I go not," and then repented and went. These two servants are Mr. Profession and Mr. Practice. Mr. Profession is always saying to the Almighty, "I am going to serve thee and love thee and obey thee. I thank thee, O Lord, that I am not as other men are, — impenitent, worldly, lovers of pleasure, or even as this poor heretic. I go to prayer-meeting, and I believe all the creeds." But then, having said that, he stops there, and he is no nobler, purer, juster, than other men. Mr. Practice, on the other hand, says, "I don't believe in religion; I don't think much of the church; I have my doubts about Jesus Christ"; and he goes and does just what Jesus wishes him to do. If he sees a poor man, he helps him; if he finds a sick man, he takes care of him; if a stranger comes to him wanting work, he sees if he cannot get something for him to do. So Mr. Profession and Mr. Practice divide religion between them. The one says it, and the other does it. But ought not each of them to say it and do it too? What should we think of it, if artists, chemists, engineers, lawyers, physicians, should divide their occupations in this way? One man professes to be a physician, keeps his office

open, with his name on the side of the door, but refuses to go and see any sick person. Another denies that he is a physician, keeps no office, declares he has no faith in medicine, and yet spends his time in finding sick people and privately administering drugs for their relief. We should think it a very odd and unnecessary division of labor. We should say, "This ought ye to have done, but not to leave the other undone."

To believe in an Infinite Perfection, and to worship it, is the first and greatest of human duties. It is the root and the fountain of all. The sense of a Supreme Good and Beauty, the feeling of an Ineffable Majesty and Holiness, the belief in one Supreme and Perfect Being, — this gives unity, aim, consistency, stability, to our life. Without it, what are we? where are we? Motes in the sunbeam, coming from nothing, going nowhere.

When God asks us to put our trust in him, it is not for his sake he asks it, but for ours. It is because we need this faith for peace, progress, goodness. We need to have faith in a Supreme Being, whose name and nature is love; who fills the heavens and earth with his benign presence, and is guiding all the events of time to the great consummation of a glorious beauty. If we deem this world

the sport of chance or the slave of fate, if we look up to an Infinite Despotism enthroned in the heavens, if God seems to us cruel or hard or cold, — then there is a seed of bitterness in the soul which no outward prosperity can sweeten. We need to have faith in perfect love, infinite wisdom, and a fatherly providence in order to have any inward content or peace.

There is a philosophy, as we have seen, which tells us that we cannot know God; that the Infinite and Absolute are beyond the reach of our finite faculties. But the best answer to this is, that men everywhere do feel after God and find him; that the idea of the Infinite is just as natural to us as the idea of the finite; that the idea of a perfect being comes to us at the same time with the notion of an imperfect being. You cannot think of something which is imperfect without at the same time thinking of the perfect. When I say a thing is imperfect, I mean that it is *not* perfect; that is, the idea of the perfect must be in my mind in order to think of imperfection. Therefore, though it may be improper according to metaphysics to know the Infinite Being, it is impossible, in practice, not to know him. God is in all our thoughts, whether we recognize him there or not; he is the necessary element of all thinking. In spite of metaphysics, therefore, we can know God; and,

whatever the philosophers may say, we may venture to believe in the Infinite and the Eternal.

There is also a theology of nescience which joins hands with the philosophy of nescience in denying our knowledge of God. It proposes certain doctrines (such, for example, as the Trinity or the Atonement), making assertions concerning the nature of God, making assertions concerning the moral nature of God; and when we urge objections to these doctrines, we are told that they are mysteries. Now that there are mysteries everywhere, in nature and providence, we all know; that there are mysteries in God and in man. But revelation is the unveiling of God; it is removing mystery and letting in light. When God sent Christ into the world he said, as in the beginning, "Let there be light; and there was LIGHT." Where revelation begins, mystery ends.

The Jewish prophets and priests taught that revelation was a mystery, in the same way as now, and were rebuked for it by Isaiah in words which have the same force to-day.* "And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed. And the book is delivered to him that is

* Isaiah xxix. 11.

not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I am not learned." If you go to the laity and speak to them of the simplicity of the gospel, and ask them to look for themselves into its truths, with independent and free minds, they say, "We cannot; for we are not learned: these are theological questions, questions for the clergy. We accept what they tell us, and let it alone. We do not trouble ourselves about it." If then you go to the clergy, and ask them for a rational and intelligible view of God, in accordance with nature and conscience, they reply, "It is a mystery." The Church, to-day, continues to erect altars to the unknown God.

I do not object to theological mysteries on grounds of reason chiefly. The harm done by such doctrines is, that they put God at a distance from us, when he is near by. They teach us that he is an unknown God, to be worshipped ignorantly, when he wishes us to come to him and see him as a Father. There are enough of mysteries in the world, but mystery is no part of revelation. Revelation is the taking away of mystery, the unveiling of God's face. When people, therefore, speak of "revealed mysteries," they utter a contradiction in terms.

Our God is not a mystery. He is not an unknown God. He is the God declared by Paul, "in whom

we live and move and have our being"; "who is not far from any one of us"; "who has made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth." He is the Father and Friend of all; the friend of black and white, of freeman and slave, of the wise and the foolish, of the good and the bad. Every man, even the most sceptical and most worldly man, has an altar somewhere in his heart to the unknown God. He is worshipping the true God sometimes, though ignorantly. He is feeling after God, if haply he may find him, who is not far from him. He needs to be told how near God is.

From the convent of the Great St. Bernard the monks went forth one morning after a night of storm and snow, and found lying close to their walls the frozen body of a traveller. They saw, by the foot-tracks, that he must have been for hours toiling on through the dreadful drifts, and all the time not a quarter of a mile from the hospitable convent. Had he known that he was so near, half an hour would have taken him out of the terrible cold into warmth and shelter and light, to a comfortable meal and a peaceful sleep.

But just so do men struggle alone, amid the storms and cold selfishness of the world, feeling after a God who they think is far off, when he is not far from

any one of them. So do they spend long years of life away from God, when in a moment, if they chose, they might be taken into the warmth and comfort of his sheltering love. They are near God, but do not know it. They need to *know* Him whom they already ignorantly worship. For there is no one wholly without God in the world. There is no one who does not have an altar, at least to the "unknown God," in his heart.

Many men erect this altar to God under the name of law. These are men of science. They worship the order of the universe, and they do not know that they are worshipping God. They may call themselves Atheists or Christians. They need to see that this magnificent stability of the universe, this grand web of law which they study and adore, is not dead law, but living law; that it is the perpetual act of God. They need to see that what they call law is only God's steady and uniform course of action, and that behind and within all this law is Divine love, an infinite tendency of things toward a perfect good; all things working together for that. Science remains cold, material, dead, so long as it is irreligious, because unspiritualized. If men of science only knew it, they would see that they are ignorantly worshipping God when they worship law. It is not

necessary for them to abandon science in order to be religious. Let their science be filled with love, and that is religion. The lecture-room may be made a temple; the most abstract mathematics become a liturgy; the cabinet of geology, mineralogy, botany, a chapel filled with more sacred relics than the bones of dead saints, because they are relics of God's presence, and bear the marks of his creating thought and forming hand. Science does not need to be silent before religion, but only to know the God whom she already ignorantly worships.

And so every generous action, every honest thought, every sincere effort to do right, is really a part of the worship of God. Many a man who thinks he has no religion, and is too honest to pretend to have it when he has it not, is really worshipping God. The more we love each other the more we can love him. For all true love seeks what is noblest and best in its object, seeks for whatever is really good and deep and noble in the character. It does not attach itself to the low and mean part of a man, but to the highest and best thing in him; that is, to some manifestation of God in him, to something in which God shows himself in man. In your friend, you see what he does not see himself; you see some deeper element, some capacity of nobleness, some divine charm,

something which God has put in his soul, and meant to be there forever. Beneath what perhaps is actually commonplace and trivial, you see the possibility of nobleness, the inward tendency toward something good. That is what you love in your friend; you never love the mean part of him, but always the better and nobler part of him.

In the teaching and life of Jesus God comes still nearer to man. The veil of mystery is taken away. Jesus teaches that he is the "Universal Father, whose sun shines on the evil and the good." He teaches that he is "a spirit, and that those who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." We come near to God and know him when we assume the attitude of children. "No one knoweth the Father but the Son, and he to whom the Son shall reveal him." Jesus knew God by becoming his Son; trusting him, loving him, obeying him, walking with him, talking with him, as a son trusts, loves, obeys, walks with, talks with, his father. When Jesus lived with God in this entire, childlike trust, he revealed him, nevermore to be a mystery. Henceforth God has put his spirit into our hearts, by which we too may say *Abba, Father.* When we assume the attitude of sons, we also know God, and are able to reveal him to others.

IV.

THE BIBLE AND INSPIRATION.

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The view of inspiration which has been diligently taught in the Protestant Church has probably done great harm to the Bible. It has made it the word of God in such a sense that it has ceased to be the word of man. It has surrounded it with an awe which has kept men at a distance. We are taught not to speak about the Bible, or study it, as we would any other book. It is too sacred for that. Every word in the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, is the word of God, so we must not criticise, doubt, or question any part of it. If we see contradictions between different portions of this book, we must refuse to admit them. It is all sacred, all holy, because it is all the word of God, and no part of it the word of man. The lines which Scott has put into the mouth of the White Lady of Avenel, said to have been afterward copied by Lord Byron on the fly-leaf of his Bible, express the popular idea: —

"Within this awful volume lies
The mystery of mysteries.

Happiest they of human race
To whom our God hath granted grace
To read, to hear, to hope, to pray,
To lift the latch, and force the way.
But better had he ne'er been born
Who reads to doubt, or reads to scorn."

That we should respect the Bible, and not treat it with indifference, is right; that we should worship it as an idol, is bad. The chief harm done by this doctrine is, that it destroys our interest in the Bible itself. For the main interest of a book is, that it excites thought and feeling in our own mind. But to think and feel, we must be free. If we are tied beforehand to certain conclusions and certain emotions, the soul is stupefied, and its vital interest frozen. As long as we look at the Bible with awe and reverence only, we do not really love it. We put it on our centre-table, we present copies of it as birthday presents and wedding gifts, but seldom read it. We regard it as making the house a little safer, as having a sort of sacramental influence, but we find it hard work to look into it. We may read the Bible as a duty or study it as a task; that is all. To read the Bible in this way is the sacrament of Protestants; being to many what the mass is to Catholics, and possessing a mysterious saving grace,

apart from any moral or intellectual influence. Thus some persons read the Bible through, from Genesis to Revelation, several times in their lives. This is a religious *tour de force*, an act of self-sacrifice supposed to have merit.

The curious fact in regard to this theory of verbal inspiration is, that the Bible itself makes no such claim. The word "inspiration" occurs only twice: once in the Old Testament, and again in the New Testament (2 Timothy iii. 16). This last text is, in fact, the great proof-text of the doctrine, and is so often quoted as conclusive evidence, that we are apt to suppose that it claims some kind of verbal inspiration for the Scriptures, according to the doctrine of Church orthodoxy. It does no such thing. First, it does not say what Scripture is inspired; secondly, it does not define the sort of inspiration. Probably the passage means either that all Scripture which is written by inspired men is profitable, or that all Scripture which is so profitable is written by inspired men. The Christian Church has practically adopted the last interpretation; for it took the Church three centuries to make up its mind what books ought to belong to the New Testament. It selected those it found profitable, and dropped the rest. The Epistle of Barnabas, after having belonged to the Christian

Scripture for three hundred years, dropped out of the New Testament in the fourth century.

Every extreme produces a reaction toward the other extreme. The reaction from the doctrine of verbal inspiration is to the denial of all inspiration. Because we cannot believe that everything in the Bible is divine, we refuse to see the infinite majesty, beauty, and glory which are so generally present in it. People who begin by worshipping the Bible often end by disliking it. But when this book, which will always be The Book, is valued for what it is rather than for what it is not, it will be more reverenced and loved than it ever has been. It will cease to be an idol, but will become more than ever a friend, helper, consoler. It will cease to be our master, and so will become more than ever our teacher and companion.

It is an intellectual error to deny inspiration; for a large part of the truth we possess comes to us through that channel. Only we must not limit inspiration to the Jews, and suppose no other race capable of it. There are two methods of getting truth: one is perception, or looking out; the other inspiration, or looking in. Perception without inspiration makes the pedant, the dry man of details, the collector of facts, who can do nothing with them after he has

them. Inspiration without perception makes the mystic, the visionary, the mere theorist. Perception joined with inspiration makes the man of genius, the man of science, the discoverer, the statesman, the poet, the prophet. No great thing was ever accomplished in this world without inspiration.

But inspiration is of different kinds and different degrees. There is the inspiration of the artist and poet, or of the thinker and philosopher. There is the inspiration of the lawgiver and statesman, of the prophet and saint. There is artistic inspiration, poetic inspiration, religious inspiration. The common quality in all is the reception of influence from a higher sphere, an opening of the mind for higher influence, a light from within and from above.

Why do we call the poet inspired? What is his inspiration? It is that he does not manufacture his poetry, does not reason it out by logic, does not make it mechanically. He looks up, waits, listens, looks. At last some gleam of beauty drops into his soul, some vision of unimagined truth dawns on his mind. He lies open to God and heaven, to the great glories of nature, to the sweet charm of life and love; and then there comes to him, spontaneously, his idea and images. As Shakespeare says, —

"The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;
And as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name."

Inspiration, in any direction, means the descent of some higher truth into the soul by vital processes, not merely logical or mechanical. Take, for an example, the case of the Greeks. God selected the Greeks from all nations of men, to be the masters and guides of the world in literature and art. They, too, were a chosen nation, a peculiar people. Almost every form of beauty sprang into being by a special inspiration. No one copied another; each went on his own path, where he saw some divine beauty leading the way. So they became teachers of men in the domain of beauty. Homer teaches us forever what epic poetry is; Herodotus is the father of history; Æschylus is the father of tragedy; Aristophanes of comedy; Pindar of the ode; Demosthenes of oratory. The inspired sculptors carved in statues the ideal forms of gods and men. The inspired architects built a Parthenon, whose perfect beauty, even when shattered and crumbling, surpasses all we can do to-day.

Every one admits that the Greeks teach with authority in this domain of beauty, but no one supposes them to be infallible.

The real reason which has influenced the Church to invent and maintain the doctrine of an infallible inspiration is a supposed necessity. On the same ground the Roman Catholics defend the infallibility of the Church. Unless the Church is infallible, say the Catholics, how can it teach with authority? Unless the Bible is infallible, say the Protestants, how can it teach with authority?

Now, we may readily admit that, in order to learn, and to make progress, we need teachers who shall speak with a certain sort of authority. We need to believe in our teacher's knowledge, in order to open our mind to him, and to listen with interest and docility to his instruction. But I do not believe that any faith in an infallible Church, an infallible Bible, or even an infallible Christ, is necessary for this purpose. What is the argument for the verbal infallibility of the Bible? Not that its writers claim it; they do not. Not that there are no contradictions and errors of language and facts; for these are numerous. It is asserted only from a supposed necessity, a supposed need of some infallible authority. The Catholics have their infallible Church;

Protestants must have their infallible Bible. People will not believe in the Bible or its truths, it is thought, unless they are pronounced infallible in every part. It must be so full of inspiration that it shall run over at either end, so that even the Book of Genesis shall teach us an infallible geology and chronology, and the Book of Revelation declare the fate of Pope Pius IX. Let people begin to doubt that every part of the Bible, even Solomon's Song, is the Word of God, and presently, it is said, they will doubt the whole. Unless they believe that the whale swallowed Jonah, they will give up the Sermon on the Mount and the Parable of the Good Samaritan. But how is it in other things? How is it in history, in science, in mathematics? Let us see what common-sense teaches about it.

No one supposes that Newton was inspired infallibly when he wrote the Principia. But all mankind accepted his theories; and though not one person in a thousand can understand his reasoning, no one doubts his conclusions. He is an authority, though he is not infallible.

No one believes Gibbon infallibly inspired to write his Decline and Fall. But it is so much of an authority to this day, that Niebuhr, the chief Roman historian of our time, knew his Gibbon by heart,

and tells us that no one can improve on that great work.

It is *knowledge* which creates authority in a teacher. Faraday is an authority in chemistry, Agassiz in natural history, Peirce in mathematics; but who supposes them to be infallible?

The common-sense view of the Bible is, that it is our guide and our teacher, because it is full of truth. It is because it is so compact with Divine things, that we say it is from God. We do not say it is true because it is inspired; but we say it is inspired because it is true. It is a book, we may safely say, that will never be superseded, any more than Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, will be superseded. It will grow in interest immensely, in proportion as we study it intelligently and freely. When we make no extravagant claims for it, but let it rest on its own merits, infidelity will cease to attack it. If there is anything in it you do not understand, wait till you do. If there is anything you cannot believe, pass it by. There is enough left which you can believe.

The Bible "is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." It has guided men to God through all these long centuries; it has civilized humanity, sustained mourners, comforted sorrow, created happy homes, made family

life peaceful, awakened an interest in truth, quickened the intellect, opened heaven to the dying, and given hope in the midst of despair. A book that does this does not need to be propped up by theological theories; it can stand and walk alone, and take care of itself. It does not need to be protected by laws against blasphemy; the love and gratitude of men are a sufficient protection. It does not need to be made a master, to enslave the intellect; the more free our thought is to inquire and examine, the more we shall come to honor it, to love it, and to believe in it. Why is not this enough? Why manufacture a theory of inspiration to strengthen that which is already strong enough without it? It is as though you should erect a wooden scaffold round the great Pyramid to hold it up.

Inspiration is insight, and insight is immediate knowledge. The inspired poet sees beauty; the inspired prophet sees truth. Knowledge carries its own evidence. He who knows anything thoroughly becomes an authority to us. That is enough.

I meet a man who has just come from the centre of Africa. It is Dr. Livingstone, or it is Burton or Speke. He describes what he saw, his long labors, his sufferings, his cruel hardships. He tells how he at last saw the vast lake, Victoria Nyanza, opening

before him, and came to where the Nile issued from it. For the first time in the history of the world a civilized man has seen the source of the Nile. That which Herodotus, four hundred years before Christ, only guessed, we hear described by the man who saw it. Well, do we say, "We cannot believe your story unless you are infallibly inspired to tell the truth?" No. The story is its own evidence. The man carries authority in his words, his tones, his vivid descriptions, his perfect knowledge of all he says. Truth is its own sufficient proof. A man who has been where we have not been, and seen what we have not seen, is an authority to us, because he knows all about what he says.

Now, the Bible is such an authority as this, from Genesis to Revelation. It is so vital, so full of experience, so rich in its varied history, so full of human hope and love and faith, that it will always draw men unto it and be the guide of mankind in religion and morals. As the Greeks were chosen, in the providence of God, to be the inspired teachers of beauty in art and literature, so the Jews were chosen, more than any other people, to be the teachers in religion. They were made the inspired teachers of Divine truth, and their sacred books will always be the chief sacred books of mankind.

The common-sense view of the Bible requires us to distinguish between its different parts. It advances step by step in its teaching. The Book of Genesis teaches that there is one Supreme God, maker of heaven and earth, above all other gods, King of kings and Lord of lords. The first chapter of Genesis is not meant to teach geology, but to teach monotheism. The Persians believed that the sun, moon, and stars were gods. Genesis teaches that they were the creatures of God. "God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also." The Egyptians believed that beasts and birds were divine, and worshipped them. Genesis says, "God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creatures that have life: let the earth bring forth the living creatures after his kind."

The story of Abraham and the patriarchs takes another step, and teaches faith in Providence. This Divine Being, who made the world, is a friend to his creatures. They can talk with his angels, and trust in his care. How sweet are the pictures of home, of the patriarchs in their tents, of their manly, modest confidence in their Heavenly Protector. It is like looking through a time telescope, which carries us back four thousand years, and shows to us a scene

of domestic life in its childlike simplicity and trust. It commends itself as truth. It needs no infallible inspiration to make us believe this honest, simple record.

Then another step is taken by Moses in his law. He teaches duty, morality, obedience; that God rewards the good and punishes the evil. How sublime, and yet how plain, are these instructions! How he joins piety and morality in the Ten Commandments! These also stand on their own authority; they need no inspiration to confirm them.

Pass on to the Psalms of David and the prophets. They lift us on the sublime wings of faith, and make us commune with God. Even now, when we wish to express our faith in Providence, we say, "The Lord is my shepherd." When we look forward to times of peace and joy, we take the words of the prophets, and can find nothing better. These words, uttered thousands of years ago, from that obscure race, have become the litanies of nations. Jesus, the Jew, is the teacher of mankind. Why do we dwell on his words? Why read the Sermon on the Mount for our guidance? Why are his parables ever new and fresh and full of charm? Is it because of any theological belief in their infallibility? No; but because they are instinct with truth. It is be-

cause they are living words. It is because, as he says himself, "The words I speak to you, they are spirit, and they are life." Theories of inspiration will pass away; but his words will never pass away. They are as new, as full of inspiration now, as they were at first; the comfort of sorrow, the hope of the dying, our strength and our peace. Unless we believe the Bible plenarily inspired, we shall not trust it, so it is said. It will be no sufficient guide to us, no adequate authority. But when I fall sick, I send for a physician. He prescribes for me, and I take his medicine. I do not know what it is. It may be poison; most medicines are so. I take the medicine blindly. Now, why not insist that we ought to believe *him* infallible? Why not get up a theory of plenary inspiration about doctors? Why not argue that no one will trust them unless we assume that they are infallible? But we *do* trust our physician, because we know him to be wise, prudent, conscientious, experienced. We trust our life to him, the lives of our children, the lives of those we love best.

You go to the Mammoth Cave in Kentucky. You take a guide, perhaps the guide Stephen, a colored man, formerly a slave, — an ignorant man. You know nothing of him but this, that he has guided hundreds of travellers before you, and has guided

them safely. You enter the mysterious passages. You pass from one chamber to another. Passages diverge in all directions; still you follow through the great darkness the feeble lamp of your guide. You descend precipices, you climb ladders, you come to a river, and cross it in a boat beneath an overhanging roof of rock. You go on and on, mile after mile, until you seem to have left forever the day and upper air. Immense darkness, perpetual night, undisturbed silence, broods around. You are many miles from the entrance. If your guide has made any mistake, you are lost. But you follow him with entire confidence. Why? Do you believe him to be plenarily inspired? Do you think him infallible? Not at all. But you trust in his long experience. He has guided travellers safely for years, and that is enough. So the Bible has guided the footsteps of travellers seeking truth and God. It has brought generation after generation out of darkness into light. It leads us through the mysterious depths of our own experience It goes sounding on along the dim and perilous way of human life. It points out on either side the false paths which would lead you to death. It speaks with authority, a far higher than that of a theological infallibility. It is full of the Spirit of God, which is the spirit of truth, and its power is not dependent on

the theories of inspiration which the Church may devise, but on its own immortal life, its sublime elevation, its power of bringing the soul to God and to peace.

It is a remarkable fact that the Apostle Paul, whose words are quoted as proof of the doctrine of infallible inspiration, declares his own teaching to be imperfect and provisional. He states, as nearly as possible, the doctrine which in modern times has been called "the relativity of knowledge," and applies it to his own teaching. We refer to the passage in the thirteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, where he says, "We know in part, and prophesy" (or teach) "in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part will be done away."

This is a curious statement in itself, and curious as coming from the Apostle Paul. "Knowledge," he says, "is partial, imperfect, incomplete; and is therefore to pass away." His own knowledge he declares to be thus imperfect and fugitive. He puts himself along with those to whom he speaks, and thus confesses that everything which he knows himself, all his own system of doctrine, all his own theology, is partial, and not to continue forever. In other words, he seems to say that all his present opinions about

God, Christ, and man, about sin and salvation, about this world and the other world, are temporary opinions which he does not hope to retain permanently. He expects to change his opinions by and by, and to believe differently. He expects to give up his present creed, and to have another. All creeds, all beliefs, all opinions, are transient; nothing is permanent but faith, hope, and love. All that we know here we shall know so differently there, that it will be another knowledge, and not this.

Now it makes little difference whether he is here referring to the present life or to the future life, to the coming of Christ in this world or in the next. In either case his statement is a death-blow to all kinds of bigotry and all kinds of dogmatism. For, if the Apostle Paul supposed that his own opinions were transient, and did not expect to believe always as he believed then, how is it possible that any one else should be certain that his views are to be always the same? If Paul was sure, not of the stability, but of the instability, of his opinions, who can venture to dogmatize? And yet while the Apostle Paul, the founder of all Christian theology, declared his theology temporal, those who merely possess a theology derived from his, consider theirs to be eternal. He says that his is provisional, and for that

time; they think theirs, which is only an inference from his, to be for all time. He was vitally inspired, they are not. He was a man of profound insight, they are shallow. He was a trained logician, their logic is full of gaps and flaws. And yet the view which he reached by means of this wonderful inspiration, this long experience, this profound thought, and which he held with the conviction of his whole soul, he regarded as *only one view of the truth;* while all these second-rate system-makers pronounce theirs to be *the only view of the truth.* This is certainly a curious state of things.

And many may be inclined to think it equally curious that such a view as this should be taken at all by the Apostle. Is it not, they may say, a confession of universal scepticism, this admission that all knowledge is to vanish away? Is it not saying that there is no such thing as absolute truth? But certainly the Apostle Paul had not in his constitution the least tendency to scepticism. His belief in truth and its reality is entire. All his convictions are clear, deep, and permanent. By the strength of his convictions he accomplished his great work for Christianity and the world, which the least alloy of doubt in his own mind would have made him incapable of doing. Every strong believer since his day has gone

to him for support; and all subsequent orthodox theology has planted itself on the theology of this Apostle. His doctrine, then, must be very far indeed from scepticism.

The only explanation of his statements which seems consistent and sufficient is this: truth is absolute, real, eternal; but our knowledge of it is incomplete and partial. Every intellectual statement is an approximation; every verbal proposition an attempt. There is such a thing as truth, and we can see it; but when we come to put what we see into words, error necessarily comes in. We are like a portrait-painter attempting a likeness. The face at which he looks is truth, real and certain. The image of the face in his mind is already somewhat confused and indistinct. The portrait which he makes from that image is still more imperfect. There might be twenty different portraits made of the same face. Every portrait might have some truth, some resemblance; but none would be perfectly true. Some would be much more true than the rest, and yet the best portrait among them would be, in some particulars, inferior to each of the others. All of them taken together would give a better idea of the person represented than any single one by itself. And so it is with the creeds of Christendom. Each one is a portrait of the mind

of Christ, some better, some worse. But the most erroneous creed may contain some Christian truth which is wanting in the most orthodox of them; and all of them are destined to be superseded in that day when we shall see Christ face to face.

"We know in part." All our knowledge of ourselves, of others, of the world, is partial, and God meant that it should be so. We cannot expect to have it otherwise. In opinions we must be contented with probabilities, and learn to dispense with certainty. We can have certainty for ourselves, but only for ourselves. Infallibility is inward, in our experience, not outward, in our statement. There is no outward infallibility to be found anywhere. No Church is infallible, no creed is infallible, no book is infallible. No outward support is permanent. All certainty is within, in the depths of our own life. Certainty comes to us by living experience; that is, by repeated acts of life. By repeated acts of thought and feeling we become certain of our own existence; by repeated acts of perception, we become certain of the existence of the outward world; by repeated acts of prayer, penitence, submission, trust, we become certain of the existence of God; by repeated acts of obedience to the law of Christ, and of faith in the promises of Christ, we become certain of the reality of Christianity.

It is natural, therefore, it is right, to long for certainty. We all desire to feel the ground firm under our feet. We shrink from doubt, from hesitation, from change. But we mistake in supposing that we can find certainty in any outward standard. He only can say, "I *know* in whom I have believed," who has lived by faith. He only shall know of the doctrine who shall do the will of God. "The world cannot receive the spirit of truth," said Jesus, "because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." "Hereby," says John, "we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments." And again, the Apostle assures us that knowledge comes from love, and not love from knowledge. "Let us love," says he, "in deed and in truth, and hereby we know that we are of the truth." "Every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God." And, finally, he teaches that the true evidence on which we may rely is inward. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself."

We do *know*, — we do know something. There is such a thing as certainty; we are not always nor altogether afloat; we are not at sea without an anchor, drifting uncertainly we know not whence, to we

know not where. The Apostle Paul does not contradict himself and the rest of the Scriptures by teaching that there is no such thing as certain knowledge. He avoids scepticism on the one hand, and dogmatism on the other hand, by teaching that we know something, but that that something is imperfectly known. The substance of our knowledge will remain; its form will pass away.

V.

THE TRUE MEANING OF EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANITY.

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THIS word "evangelical" is used in a technical sense by many persons. It is intended by them to designate a certain class of Christians and Christian churches, and to distinguish them from another class. Thus, at the communion service we sometimes hear an invitation given to all members of evangelical churches, others being excluded. So the Young Men's Christian Association admits to full standing as members only those who belong to evangelical churches. Used in this sense, the word is sufficiently intelligible. It is meant to include those who believe in what are commonly called Orthodox doctrines, and to exclude those who disbelieve them. Orthodox doctrines are understood to be the doctrines of the Trinity, Total Depravity, the Vicarious Atonement, Supernatural Conversion, Everlasting Punishment, and the Infallible Authority of the Scriptures. Those churches and Christians who reject any of these are not evangelical. Thus Unitarians are excluded,

because they reject the Trinity; Universalists, because they reject Everlasting Punishment; and Roman Catholics, the New Church, and Quakers, because they deny the Infallible Authority of the Scriptures, substituting the authority of the Church, the Inner Light, or that of Swedenborg.

This is the technical sense in which the word is used; and no doubt every one has a right to call himself by any name he will, provided that in doing so he does not deprive others of a name they have also a right to possess.

Thus, the Swedenborgians have a perfect right to call themselves the New Church; but when the Roman Catholics or Episcopalians call themselves "*The* Church," they are not polite; for they imply that no one but themselves can belong to the Church of Christ. The names Episcopalian, Baptist, Methodist, are distinctive, honest, and not arrogant. But I doubt whether the same can be said of the word "evangelical," when used in this exclusive sense. Let us consider its meaning and see.

The word "evangelical" is not found in the New Testament. No system of doctrine and no church is there spoken of as being evangelical. The word "evangelist" occurs three times, in each case meaning a preacher of the gospel. We speak of the "Four

Evangelists," meaning the writers of the "Four Gospels." But no such term is applied in the New Testament itself to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; nor are their writings anywhere called gospels. This term was not so applied till they were a hundred years old.

The words "gospel" and "evangelical" mean the same thing. They both mean "good news." One is the Greek form, the other the Saxon. The word "evangelical" comes from the Greek words *εὐ, good*, and *ἄγγελον, a messenger*. The word "gospel" is from the Saxon "godspell," or a good story. It means a piece of good news.

Now I do not object to our Orthodox friends for taking this name "evangelical" to themselves as a technical name. I know that it is hard to find a name when we want one. Those who reject Orthodoxy have their difficulties also. They call their system sometimes "Rational Christianity," and sometimes "Liberal Christianity"; but perhaps these words are a little arrogant too. I do not like them; for I know that many Orthodox Christians are just as liberal and just as rational as any other Christians can be. It is not the name which is important, but the thing. What I wish to ask is, "Whether the system called Orthodoxy is really more evangelical

than its opposite? Is it better news? Is it more joyful, peaceful, and glad than any other faith, or is it not?" That is the question.

No doubt Christianity, as preached at first, was not only called a gospel, but was a gospel. It was *good news*, — taught as such, received as such, and, like other good news, producing great joy and peace in believing. It created a mighty hope. It enabled the early Christians to bear persecution and death patiently. It lifted them above all fear. It was "glad tidings to all people." It was "salvation," or safety. It was proclaimed by the angels as good-will and peace to men. It was announced by Jesus and by John as the kingdom of heaven come down upon earth.

Surely, though one does not care about the word "evangelical," and may be perfectly willing that this shall be monopolized by those who hold certain views, it is only natural to care somewhat about the thing. One would be very sorry to know that he believes and teaches that which is not glad tidings nor good news. For, if it is not, we must be wrong, and have wandered from original Christianity. Is there, then, any reason for saying that the system called orthodoxy is better news than the opposite system?

Suppose that we have never heard the doctrines

of Orthodox or of Liberal Christianity, and now hear them preached for the first time. We are, let us suppose, intelligent and educated heathen, living in China or Japan, and there arrive two ministers, one an Orthodox man, the other a Liberal Christian or a Broad Churchman. The Orthodox man begins by telling us that we are sinners, and radically corrupt and evil, so as to be justly exposed to the wrath of God and future punishment. I will not insist on total depravity, because that is not now asserted by all Orthodox men. But, no doubt, the first article of their faith is this doctrine of human depravity.

Now, this might turn out to be true, but I do not think I should consider it *good* news. I should say, "I never supposed myself to be very good; I knew I was often sinful"; but when I am told that there is nothing good in me, and that I am so bad that God is justly angry with me, and that I deserve his wrath, "It is news," I say, "but it is not certainly good news."

"No," says my preacher, "this is not the good news; that is to come. The good news is, that you can be saved from this sin and its consequences. God has come down as a man, and was born as a child, and was killed, and rose again, and was punished in your place, making a proper sacrifice and

atonement to his own justice, and so now you can be forgiven."

"Well," the Chinaman might reply, "that *is* good news so far as this, that you first tell me I am in great danger, and then that I am not. First, you tell me I am a great sinner, and that God hates me; and now you say that he has done something to take away my sin, and so I am just where I was before you came. I should say that this is neither good news nor bad news. One part balances the other."

"Not so," says our preacher; "there is an infinite happiness offered you, better than you can think or dream, but on certain conditions. You must repent and believe. You must believe these doctrines and repent of your sins, and you will be saved; otherwise you will go to everlasting torment."

"But," says the heathen, "this is not good news at all; this is very bad news. For, suppose my mind is so made that I cannot believe your doctrines, and my heart so made that I cannot love this God who threatens to torment me forever, what am I to do then? This is bad news, and no glad tidings at all to me."

Now, however Orthodoxy may be mitigated, it must, no doubt, hold to these main points, or cease to be Orthodoxy; that man by nature is so sinful as to deserve and receive everlasting punishment, unless he

is supernaturally converted by Divine grace, and not by any work or merit of his own. And I think it doubtful whether this can be called a piece of good news.

I am, let us imagine, in apparent good health. I am not aware of any serious disease. But a learned physician calls me aside and says to me, "Sir, I perceive by infallible symptoms that you have a deadly malady. You will die in three or four weeks unless you take a certain remedy. I have this remedy, and perhaps I will give it to you. But you can do nothing yourself to be cured."

I do not think that on hearing this I should go back to my friends and say, "I have heard a piece of good news which fills me with delight!" The news might be true, but would not be very exhilarating.

I know very well that, according to Orthodoxy, salvation is freely offered to all. But then it is also certain that in order to be saved we must repent, we must be converted, we must be born again; and it is certain that these are described as mysterious processes, which we are unable to accomplish, except by some special Divine influence. The danger is represented as real and certain, but the mode of rescue mysterious, and not in our own power. This is why

I think that Orthodoxy, in its past and present form, is not really a gospel of good news, and therefore not really evangelical. The Roman Catholic Church has an advantage over Protestant Orthodoxy in this respect. Describing the danger in the same way, it points out a plain, simple, and practical way of escape. An Orthodox Protestant can never tell exactly what to do, in order to be converted and saved. But a Roman Catholic can. All he has to do is to receive the sacraments. He must be baptized, and so become a child of God. When he commits sin, he must go to confession and be absolved. Once a year he must partake the sacrament. Then if he dies at any time he is sure to escape hell, and, after spending some time in purgatory, sure to go to heaven. This, if believed, might I think be called, perhaps, in a certain sense, good news.

But, after all, it is not very comforting or exhilarating to be told that our Heavenly Father is a being who has made some of his children with the intention of punishing them to all eternity in terrific torments. Even if *we* can escape, it is not good news to hear of the danger and certain destruction of multitudes of our fellow-creatures. When we heard, the other day, of the destruction of a steamer in the Sound, and the loss of so many passengers, did it seem

good news because we were safe? Suppose we had been on the wreck, and had been taken into a boat and brought to land, while we saw around men and women and children struggling in vain for life; should we have called out joyfully, "Good news! good news! *I* am safe"?

The glad tidings of Christianity, according to Orthodoxy, are, that millions and millions of our fellow-creatures have gone down already into the sufferings of hell, without hope of any rescue, and that millions more are to follow them, while we and some others in Christian lands may be saved. Is that the good news which Jesus came to bring? Is this the cause of that angelic joy which overflowed the barriers which divide heaven from earth, and caused the song of the heavenly host to be heard by the simple shepherds on the plains of Bethlehem? I cannot think so. The good news must be something of a different kind.

We will next suppose that some preacher of the Broad Church comes to the Buddhists. What has he to tell the Chinese about *his* religion?

He tells them, first, the story of the Prodigal Son, to show them that sin consists in going away from God and his law, and indulging one's self in wilful and false pleasures. Then he teaches that suffering is sent to make us repent and return; that when we

repent and return, God is our Father, very glad to have us back again. He says that God is always the same; that he does not need any sacrifice or atonement; that hell is here, and heaven is here; that sin is itself hell, and that love and purity are heaven.

Now, whether this view of God be true or not true, it is at least "good news."

He tells them, next, the story of the Good Samaritan, to show that all men are neighbors and brothers; that God loves all his children alike, and that they also must love each other. He tells them that the Jew is no dearer in the sight of God than the Frenchman or the Indian is, and that the Christian is no more a favorite than the Buddhist or Mohammedan. That therefore all must help each other, and that so they will best obey God. He tells them, again, that the way to God and heaven is to do what we can, and to trust to him for power to do more; that he who accepts all the truth he sees, will see more; that he who does all the duties he is able to do, will have power to do more. He tells them that no man is to blame for his unbelief, unless it is wilful, and that there is no merit in belief, unless it implies a love for truth and patient pursuit of it. He says that God requires of us no great things, but to be faithful

in the little things of daily life. He assures them that if they do what they can, they will be safe and happy here and hereafter.

Finally, he tells them that religion is not a thing by itself, but a good spirit, — a spirit of truth and of love, filling all of life. He says that religion does not consist in prayers and sacraments any more than in daily work; that it belongs to Monday and Tuesday as well as to Sunday; to the shop and street as well as to the kitchen. He tells them that God reveals himself in nature and science no less than by prophets and sacred books; that he reveals himself in every good soul, in the good and kind hearts about us, in our father's and mother's love, no less than in the words of Jeremiah and Confucius. He says that "all scripture is given by inspiration," the scriptures of the East and West, all that elevates man; that the scriptures of the Hindoos and Persians were sent by God, so far as they contain Divine truth; and that Christianity is better than other religions, because it is larger and deeper, less exclusive, more generous and hospitable to all truth.

Then our evangelist goes on to say that all life is advancing; that life does not die; that matter dies off it; that Christ rose out of this world into a higher, out of this body into a nobler, and that we

shall follow him. He says there is no real separation between these two worlds; that the next begins before this one ends; that death is not the end, but the beginning; not going down into the tomb, but up into a fuller and richer existence. He declares the true resurrection to be going up; to be ascent to a better world, not a return to this one.

Of these two evangels I now ask which is the most evangelical? Which is most a gospel, most truly good news? Is that good news which leaves in the universe the permanent horror of an everlasting hell side by side with a heaven, distributing and dividing fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, friends and lovers between the two? Is it glad tidings to be told that God, through all eternity, will never reign over more than one part of his universe, and that the Devil will be king forever over the other? Is it not better news to learn that the black spots on creation — evil, suffering, sin, death — are to be made at last instruments of good; that every knee shall at last bow to goodness, and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the Father?

Now, if those who believe in a narrow Christianity, limited to a part of God's creatures and creation, choose to call it an evangelical system, and a gospel

of good news, I do not object. Let them keep the name.

But let those who receive Christianity in another and higher sense show this faith in the spirit and temper of their daily life. They live in a world full of a Divine love, where sorrows and trials are the shadows which shall pass away, and bring good in their place. Let them be glad and grateful. Let them not be troubled by little disappointments, or perplexed by temporary difficulties, or anxious about this life or the other. Let them trust in God and his perpetual providence. Let them do with their might what their hands find to do of beautiful things and good.

It may be said that this is a system of *optimism*, and that it makes light of evil and sin. No doubt true Christianity is optimism; for it teaches that all things work for good to those who love God; that God is love, and dwells in love; and that this love is to conquer all evil, so that God, who is love, shall be all in all. But it does not deny the reality of present evil or sin, as now existing in the world. This evil we know. It is simply a matter of fact. Evil exists, and cannot be denied. The only question is, Does it exist for a good end or for a bad end? Is it all to end in good, or is it to go on forever as evil?

Is it, in its nature, infinite or finite, limited or unlimited? Orthodoxy asserts the last; Liberal Christianity the other. The Broad Church says, "Evil exists, but it exists for the sake of good, and is to end in good. It exists that we may resist it and fight against it, and so develop energy and virtue. It exists that we may be able to choose between evil and good, and so be free beings." Since the difference between the finite and the infinite is an infinite difference, it follows that the Orthodox view of evil and the opposite differ by an absolutely infinite amount.

One of the views we have thus contrasted makes of life merely a scene of probation. We are here on trial, and at death the sentence is to be pronounced. The other makes of life, not probation, but education. We are here to be educated by all our experience, to be developed into something higher. We are to grow up in all things, and to become more and more like Jesus Christ. If we adopt this generous theory, let us be diligent to make our calling and election sure.

VI.

THE TRUTH ABOUT SIN.

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Religious preachers and writers very generally consider it their duty to represent sinfulness in as black colors as possible. They imagine that they cannot err in that direction. They suppose men so ready to excuse themselves, and to think well of themselves, that there is no danger of their thinking too badly of themselves. The one great sin of man they suppose to be spiritual pride; the one great virtue, humility. Therefore they teach natural and total depravity; that all men are born with sinful natures, and that all are born totally depraved. You must not allow men to suppose they have anything good in them; if they do, they will suppose they are about good enough. The great Orthodox preachers have been those who gave the most awful pictures of human depravity; who have tried to convince little children that they hated God, that they deserved nothing from him but hell, and that, while God has all claim upon us, we have none on him. These ideas are presumed to be eminently religious ideas;

the more we think in this way, the more pious and humble we are considered to be.

Let us examine these beliefs by common-sense and by Scripture; and first, let us test this notion, that while God has all claims on us, we have none on him.

Does such an opinion as this tend to glorify God? I think not. Would a father consider it honorable to tell his children that they had no claims upon him for support, for advice, protection, education, love? Should we honor an earthly parent more highly for declaring that he owed nothing to his children, that he considered himself under no responsibilities to them? Assume that he was vastly wiser and better and more powerful than they; would that make him less responsible, or more so? I think that we honor those parents the most who have taught their children to feel that they have a right to come to them always for help, sympathy, counsel. We honor the father who teaches his children that everything he does he does for them, that all he has he has for them. Let every other door be closed to them, his is open; let all other men reject them, he gladly receives them. No matter what their faults and sins are, he still feels bound to care for them and never to abandon them. God calls himself Father, teaches us to say to him every day, "Our Father"; and so he teaches us

that we have claims on him which he cannot and will not disallow.

If there be one law of ethics which no one can question, it is that all power implies responsibility. Responsibility for the use of power is in exact proportion to the degree of power. But the power of God is infinite, therefore his responsibility is infinite. The fact that we are weak and ignorant does not give us less claim on him, but more.

When we call God righteous, just, and holy, we speak of him as recognizing and fulfilling moral obligations, otherwise the words have no meaning. Our only conception of God as a moral being, as more than an arbitrary power, comes from these conceptions of right and truth which he has put into our souls. Do not take away these grand and holy attributes from the Almighty from a foolish notion that you make him more free and powerful thereby. The man who emancipates himself from moral restraint does not become more free, for he becomes less human. God also, when set above right and justice, becomes less divine. Nor does the Scripture take this view. The Bible everywhere represents God as under moral obligations to his creatures. One text says that "if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." Faith-

ful, that is, true to his promises, bound by his engagements; just, that is, required to forgive us by the principles of eternal right, which are a part of his own nature. He does not forgive the penitent sinner merely out of compassion, only from mercy, but also because of his justice. God is merciful, and loves to forgive; but if he did not forgive us when we repent, from his mercy, he would from his fidelity to his own promises. If he did not forgive us from his faithfulness or mercy, then he would forgive us from his justice. Such is the declaration of the Apostle. "Let God be true, though every man be a liar." By three immutable things the penitent sinner obtains pardon: from the mercy of God, the truth of God, and the justice of God. Moreover, the Bible represents the Deity not only as bound by his own nature to his creatures, but also as loving to bind himself by special engagements. The law of Moses and the gospel of Jesus are represented, both, as *covenants*. One is the old covenant, the other the new covenant. Now a covenant is what we call a contract, and expresses the idea of reciprocal obligation. Both parties are bound by a contract. And these two contracts correspond to something planted in human nature. The old contract is, that if a man obeys God he is to be re-

warded; if he disobeys, he is to be punished; if he disobeys and repents, he shall be safe; if he disobeys and perseveres, he shall continue to suffer the consequences. The new contract, the new covenant, the gospel, is, that if one will trust God, God will be his friend and help him. It does not annul the old one, but completes it, fulfils it. God wishes us to believe and feel that he is under obligations to us; that we are bound to obey, love, and trust him; that faith no less than obedience is our duty; and that he is bound to protect, forgive, help, inspire, and save us, so long as we continue to trust in him.

But what does common-sense teach of the evil of sin? It teaches us that sin is the great evil of life; that without this, all others would be tolerable. The sting of all suffering is sin.

I go into two homes. In one they have everything, and possess nothing. There is a spirit of discontent in the house. They envy their neighbors, they are jealous that they do not receive all the attention they claim, they are unhappy because they cannot get into this or that circle of society. There is no family affection, no peace, no mutual concession and good-will. Each demands everything and concedes nothing. The spirit is wrong, therefore all is wrong.

I go into another house. They have nothing, but they possess all things. They are poor, they hardly know where to go for food or clothing; but they possess a sweet content, a perfect confidence in God, an entire and constant love for each other. Therefore the evil seems not to be evil. Misery is robbed of its sting. Patience, with eyes of heavenly calm, sits by the fireside; and serene, happy thoughts; glad, kindly words; cheerful, merry talk, defeat the assault of pain and want. The soul being right, all is right. The soul being wrong, all is wrong.

The great evil of life is sin. Among the poor, it often takes the form of intemperance and brutality; among the rich, of coldness of heart, civil selfishness, polite hardness, and indifference; in short, want of heart. One had rather go into an Irish shanty, where, amid coarseness and vulgarity, there is good-heartedness, kindliness, and truth, than into some gilded saloons which freeze us with stiff decorum and the absence of all love.

One of the greatest calamities of these last years was the destruction of the great city of Chicago. The event in history most comparable to it is the fall of Babylon. "In one hour so much glory perished!" Yet there was no special sin which caused it; so all the suffering seemed only to develop strength, noble

patience, sweet endurance. The suffering called out human love and grand cordial sympathies. It showed that behind all separation of States, countries, hostile nations, beats the great warm heart of humanity. No amount of loss, suffering, pain, can be a real misfortune so long as there is no sin in it.

But look, on the other hand, at the terrible evils which come from rascality, corruption, villany in public life. This is the cloud which droops, low-hung, over our life. Men are in such haste to be rich that, in rushing forward to this goal, they throw aside, as retarding burdens, their honesty, their self-respect, their good reputation. They defile with mud the names of their fathers and those of their children. Every day we hear of some one, hitherto accounted respectable, who has been guilty of villany in the hopes of making money speedily. Legitimate business has turned into speculation. Merchants have become gamblers. The great mercantile profession, so honorable in the past, which has conferred such benefits on the world, which has advanced civilization, spread culture and knowledge, brought nations into contact, sent missions of intelligence in the fleets which spot with white sails remotest oceans, — this grand old profession is in danger of being converted into a mere clique of

speculators. If so, it will be stung to death by sin.

Sin is something very real and positive. I complain of the old theology, that it has substituted a metaphysical abstraction in place of the real evil. "Total depravity" sounds very badly, but there is nothing corresponding to it in actual life. All experience refutes the notion of total depravity. Every bad man has some good in him; every good man has some evil. A perfectly sinless man is "a faultless monster which the world ne'er saw." A perfectly sinful man is another monster which the world ne'er saw. The darkest night has its lights, the clearest day its shadows. In well-written novels the hero is never a perfect saint, but a man of generous, noble purpose, fighting with temptations and conquering them, and so rising above himself. He is not a saint all white, nor a sinner all black; but a man, with a great human heart and pure aspirations, who holds on till he conquers the evil in himself and about himself.

We see how true is the statement, If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves. Few people ever say, in so many words, that they have no sin. But they make light of sin; they think it of no consequence. Jesus judged differently when he de-

clared it better to cut off the right hand and pull out the right eye than to commit one real sin.

How do we say we have no sin? We say we have no sin, when we confess it in the abstract and deny it in the concrete. A man rises in a prayer-meeting, and declares himself the chief of sinners; says his heart is full of all evil, and that but for God's mercy he ought to go to hell. Yes; but if another man should then reply, "That is true! You are about the meanest fellow I ever knew," he would probably be angry. He did not mean to say that; he only meant that he was a sinner in a theological sense; not a real rascal by any means. He deceived himself; for all the time that he was calling himself the chief of sinners, he was in reality thinking that he had no sin. Genuine humility does not often talk about its sins. But it shows its sense of sin by tenderness toward other sinners. Humility and true penitence alone are able really to forgive. That is why we can only be forgiven when we can forgive others. A sincere man finds in his own heart the germs of all the evils which break out around him into vice and crime. Hence he cannot loudly condemn, though he greatly pities, the vicious man and the criminal. He knows that the outbreak of sin into crime is not the worst part of it. This disease is often worse before it comes

out than after. The sight of one's own inward sin, incarnate outwardly in crime, often appalls the soul and leads it to real penitence. The men in jails and state-prisons are not the worst men in the world. Those who *ought* to be there, but have cunning enough to keep out, are often worse men.

Every one ought to know his own sinful tendencies, his besetting sins, his peculiar temptations. All the time we spend in excuses and justifications is lost time. It is a great mistake to fancy ourselves strong when we are weak. Better to see our weakness, and so be prepared to resist temptation. But, on the other hand, exaggeration is of no use. Every one has some good qualities, and it is best to know them, so as to make use of them. God does not ask us to pretend to be worse than we are, in order to please him. The Apostle says, "Do not think of yourselves more highly than you ought to think." But he does not say, "Think of yourselves more lowly than you ought to think." Think *the truth*, whatever it is. Job was requested by his friends to say he was a great sinner, in order to pacify God's anger. But Job said, "No! I am not a great sinner. I am a pretty good man. I have tried to do right always. I have been eyes to the blind and feet to the lame. If a poor man got into difficulty, I tried to help him. I

was rich, but that is no sin. I used my riches for good purposes. I enjoyed it myself, and I tried to make others enjoy it. If I saw a scoundrel oppressing some helpless man or woman, I came to the rescue. What is the use of saying I am a great sinner, when I do not see it? Does God wish me to tell a lie, in order to please him? I think not. I think he likes the truth." So Job told no lie, put on no long face; and God was pleased with that, and said he liked him better than he did his advisers, who urged him to tell falsehoods to pacify the Almighty.

No man is what he ought to be: this is undeniable. And because we are not what we ought to be, we make ourselves and others miserable. By our selfishness, ill-temper, want of love, want of generosity, want of manliness and womanliness, want of truth, want of courage, we bring infinite evils on ourselves and others. Men do wrong things, and are ashamed to confess them, and so go on doing more and more wrong things to cover up the first. The hill of sin is so steep, that if you begin to slide down, you have to keep sliding; you cannot stop. You *think* you cannot, at least; but you can. If we have only the courage to confess, to own up manfully, we can be saved and forgiven.

And this forgiveness is not something technical or

theological, it is real. It is not a future forgiveness only, but a present satisfaction. When we confess our sin, and are ready to take the consequences of it, we feel at once an inward peace. We have a contentment which comes from God, and is the sign and evidence of his forgiving love. We are relieved from a great weight.

Forgiveness does not mean the taking away of all the consequences of sin. That would be bad for us. It is best to bear the outward consequences of our wrong-doing, for that makes us realize its evil, and will prevent us from falling into it again. Forgiveness means inward peace, contentment, satisfaction. It means our self-respect come back again, our hope and courage restored. It means that the inward consequences of sin are taken away. It means, above all, the assurance that God has become our friend once more. When we have all this, we may well bear patiently the outward punishment and suffering which are the necessary consequences of wrong-doing. God does not alter his laws of retribution when he forgives us. What a man soweth, that shall he also reap. When an intemperate man repents, and leaves off drinking, he does not at once recover his health injured by past excesses, he does not receive back his wasted property, he does not regain in an hour his

lost reputation and social position. No; but he has an inward satisfaction; he is satisfied with himself, filled with new courage and hope.

And this inward forgiveness comes from the justice and truth of God. It comes from the regular action of his laws. He has made us so, that if we really repent, we regain our inward peace and strength. But then the repentance is not real, unless it is strong enough to show itself in confession, in open, honest confession of the wrong we have done. Until we do this, the entire peace does not come. It must be strong enough also to induce us to make full atonement, to make good the wrong as far as we can. And also it must prove itself real by making us able to forgive others, which we can easily do when we really see that we are not essentially better than they, but perhaps worse.

"If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves." We may not have committed any outward crime, any sin of open, flagrant sort; but if we are honest with ourselves, we can generally find the roots of most such sins within us. If we have not committed them, it is because God has surrounded us with restraints, shielded us from temptation, made our lives serene and safe, fed us with wise counsels from childhood up, educated us to self-control and self-direction. Per-

haps we have never murdered a man. But if we have hated a man, and wished him out of our way, there was the little seed which, under suitable climatic influences, might have grown into murder. We have never stolen money, nor forged, and we perhaps have never had any temptation to do so. But if we have coveted what belonged to another, if we have quietly appropriated another's thought without acknowledgment, there was the seed of theft, which, if we had been born in a cellar, and bred in the street, might easily have carried us to the state-prison. What right have I, what right have you, to look down with scorn on those who have fallen because their feet were placed on slippery ice, while ours were put on solid rock? Pity them, forgive them, help them, do not judge them, unless we wish to be judged ourselves by the same hard, unforgiving law.

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves. If we say we are totally depraved, we also deceive ourselves. It may seem to us to be very humble to say that. We deceive ourselves; it is not humility, but falsehood, which apes humility. God has put into us a great deal that is good. He has given us reason, conscience, heart, freedom to choose good, power to resist evil. When he has done all this for

us, to pretend that he has made us totally depraved, is not humility, but ingratitude and impiety. The case is bad enough as it is; do not make it worse. Repent of your real sins, and repent practically, by correcting them, and then God will send into your soul his forgiving love and peace. Repentance opens the door of the heart, inwardly, toward God, and lets in all his sunshine. The pulsations of that Divine love pour out unceasingly, and rush down in light and heat and life, like the ocean of light which perpetually flows from the sun. If it is winter in our souls, it is because we have turned away from God and his love. If it is night, it is not because God has gone away from us, but because we have gone away from him. Wait, poor soul, watch, wait, listen; and when the Divine Friend comes, hasten to open the door and to let him in, and the whole house of your soul shall be filled with new light and life.

VII.

COMMON-SENSE AND SCRIPTURE VIEWS OF HEAVEN AND HELL.

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WHAT is heaven? Where is heaven? How does one enter heaven?

The most common phrases uttered about heaven are such as these: "Those who are good shall go to heaven." "I hope, when I die, to go to heaven." "I expect to meet my friends in heaven." "When we get to heaven, there will be no more sin nor sorrow."

All of these expressions, and most other expressions used about heaven, imply, 1, That it is a place; 2, That it is a place we go to after death; 3, A place where only good Christians go; 4, A place of perfect happiness, where they will always remain.

Now, it is a little remarkable that such expressions as these are not to be found in the New Testament. In the first place, heaven is often used in its primitive and simple sense for the sky, as when we read of "rain from heaven," "hail from heaven," "the clouds of heaven," "the stars of heaven," "the fowls which fly in the midst of heaven." And in the

next place, though heaven is put for the home of God and of his angels, this is not limited to a distant place or time. On the contrary, the kingdom of heaven is Christ's kingdom, especially in this world. Everything in heaven is not yet free from evil; for Paul says that "God will reconcile to himself all things in heaven and earth." The heavenly places where Christ sits, on the right hand of God, are places where we sit with him now. "He hath raised us up together with Christ, and made us sit together with him in heavenly places." We nowhere read in the Bible of any one's expressing a wish to go to heaven after death. No one in the New Testament speaks of what he shall do or have or be when he gets to heaven. These phrases are all modern and unscriptural.

The absence of these common phrases indicates that the modern idea of heaven is essentially different from that of the Bible. Our ideas of heaven are natural, and not spiritual. We locate it in space and time, a good many years distant, a good many miles away. Some persons place it in the sun, and others farther off. Some persons think that we may enter heaven as soon as we die; others, that we shall have to wait longer, and spend some time in an intermediate state, or a purgatory. We shall arrive at heaven, according to the common idea, by living on through time and travelling on through space.

But the Scripture notion of heaven differs essentially from this. It is above space and above time, therefore not natural, but supernatural. We can understand this by an illustration. There are many things perfectly real and substantial, which are not in space nor in time, nor subject to the laws of space or time. *Love* is a very real thing. We know that it exists, and we know when it does not exist; we know when it comes and when it goes. But suppose some one should say, "What has become of your love for me, and where has it gone?" And suppose the answer should be, "It has gone to Philadelphia." The answer would be absurd, because love does not come and go in space. The same is true of thought. If I say, "My thoughts are in London," I should not mean that they were in that portion of space, or that they had gone through space to get there, but only that I was thinking about London.

The heavenly kingdom is a supernatural kingdom, a kingdom above nature, therefore above space and time. It is a kingdom of God, it is his presence; and God is not in any particular space or time, but present by his activity in all space and all time.

To be in heaven is to be with God. But we enter the presence of God by a spiritual, and not by a natural act; not by taking a journey to the top of Mount

Olympus, or to the top of Mount Mern, but by taking a journey from a bad state of mind to a good state of mind. We enter the presence of God by purity of heart. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." When the heart is pure, we enter heaven. When wholly pure, we are fully in heaven.

It is a mistake to suppose that the happiness of heaven can come from being in one place rather than another place. It is only earthly happiness which comes so. A change of scene and circumstances can produce real delight, but it is earthly delight, and therefore transient. It is delightful to see beautiful scenery, to travel through an interesting country, to meet charming people, to have the means of indulging all one's tastes and wishes. But the quality of these delights is earthly, not heavenly. It is temporal, and not eternal joy, therefore essentially transient. But heavenly or eternal joy partakes of the eternal nature of God. It does not pass away; we can only lose it by leaving it.

Heaven, then, is the state of the soul, when, rising above space and time, it communes with God and eternity. When God enters the soul, then heaven enters the soul.

Heavenly joy, therefore, differs from earthly joy in this, that it flows to us from within, and not

HOW ABOUT THE ANGELS OF HEAVEN — AND THEY A STATE

from without. Therefore it does not consist, as many suppose, in being with others in a great assembly, and singing praise to God with delicious music. This would be only another form of earthly pleasure, and, like all other earthly pleasure, would soon tire us. Our hymns speak of sweet fields dressed in living green; of rivers of pleasure which flow over the bright plains; of pearly gates, and streets of shining gold; of everlasting spring, and unwithering flowers; of the absence of hunger, thirst, and disease. But all these conditions, were they multiplied a thousand times over, could not give us any real heavenly joy, for that, we repeat, comes to us from within, and not from without.

Heaven consists of heavenly knowledge, love, and action. It is seeing God's truth, loving God's goodness, and doing God's will. These three qualities or acts constitute the essence of heaven here, and of heaven hereafter. In this world, though the delight which comes to us from without is very precious, and by no means to be despised, yet the delight which comes from knowledge, love, and action, is all which is permanent, all which we can keep after we have gained it, all which becomes part of the soul itself.

Heaven consists of knowledge, love, and action. First, of knowledge. This is not opinion, or belief;

it does not come from reasoning or speculation; it is not verbal or formal, but is simply the sight of truth. For, high above the sphere of speculative belief, extends that of truth. Opinion fluctuates, truth remains one and the same. As the mountain carries its summit aloft through a region of storms into one of eternal sunshine, so above all disputed questions, all shifting clouds and creeping mists of earthly opinion, rise some truths which have no change, nor shadow of turning. We look at them from below through the cloud-region, and sometimes they are partially concealed, sometimes wholly hidden. But we know that they are there, even when we do not see them; and this knowledge is our life. Woe to the sceptic to whom all things are uncertain; who, because he has found so many things false, believes that nothing is real. To him there can be no peace, no rest, no heaven. God does not mean that any one should be a sceptic. He gives us all some certainties to begin with. We are born inheriting a capital of knowledge, which we may enlarge by our fidelity, or squander by our folly. The child is born into a world of reality. He knows his own existence, he knows that there is a real world about him. There is a charm and joy of reality in every buttercup, every bird, every stone. And he who loves truth, continually

enlarges the sphere of knowledge. He who seeks truth for its own sake never becomes a sceptic. And if he carries into life the truth which he sees, then it grows more and more real. He becomes sure of the everlasting distinctions between truth and falsehood, right and wrong, good and evil. Nothing can shake his steadfast faith in God and immortality; that right is eternally good, and wrong eternally evil. And this profound certainty, this fixed knowledge, is one of the elements of heaven, here and hereafter.

Again, the essence of heaven is love. True love, heavenly love is not desire, not appetite, not a merely instinctive and clinging affection. It is something higher. It is the power of going out of one's self in sympathy with others. It is giving one's self in the service of others. It is joy and peace in the sight of a Divine beauty and goodness which flows into all things. When we love others with a true and noble love, it is because we see in them something Divine. The object of love is, therefore, always the eternal beauty. To this Divine beauty we gladly sacrifice ourselves, and find it more blessed to give than to receive. What profound peace comes to the soul which rests, after its insatiate longing, content in the mere sight of the perfect love!

Working for good and truth is the other element

of heaven. There is a peace which comes from all honest, faithful work; from all work done in a simple sense of duty. The great content of the mass of men is in the necessity of daily work. Therefore the roots of heavenly joy, in this life and the next, are to be found in having plenty to know, to love, and to do.

What must we do in order to go to heaven?

If the kingdom of heaven is within us, if it is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, then evidently we shall not go to heaven at all, but heaven must come to us. On this subject mistakes are very great. In preaching and conversation the opposite view is usually taken for granted. Heaven is a place. It has its walls and gates like a royal garden. The saved are admitted to it as we admit students to school or college, by passing an examination. All sects teach thus; they differ only as to the nature of the certificate required. According to the Roman Catholics the certificate is given to those who have been faithful to their church, and respectful to the Virgin Mary. According to most Protestants, it is given to those who have held orthodox opinions, and have passed through the process called conversion. According to rational and practical Christians, it is awarded to those who have lived a good moral

life, and done good actions. But in all these views there is the same error. They all err in assuming that heaven is a place into which we are to be admitted at the close of life, after some kind of examination. It is assumed that there is to be a trial for every soul after death, — some one day of judgment, when we are to be examined, and to present our certificate. If this is right, we go up into heaven; if not satisfactory, we are turned down into hell.

According to this view, a view which is either taught distinctly or taken for granted in most pulpits, this life is what is called a place of probation; at the close of which the trial is to be held, and the sentence will be pronounced of guilty or not guilty. If the sentence is against us, we are sent to a place called hell, to be tormented there forever, in the society of devils. If we are acquitted, we go to a different place, called heaven, where we are to be happy forever, in the society of angels and in the presence of God.

That one part of the education of life is the testing of character, we all know; but this is continuous. We are always made stronger by the tests of life. The trial of faith worketh patience. But common observation shows that the world is no such scene of probation as is commonly assumed. We are not

here to be tried for our lives, we are here to be educated. We are tested by life itself, during all of life, and not merely at its close. What sort of a Christian probation do those have who are born outside of Christendom, as are the majority of the human race? Within Christendom, how many have ever had a Christian education, or have come under Christian influences? If they have been under such influences, how often are they also under other influences, tending to neutralize them. How can any sentence of "guilty" or "not guilty" be pronounced on all men? We are all guilty and all innocent; guilty in some things, innocent in others. We try to do good, and we fail; we mean to do right, and we do wrong. The spirit is willing, the flesh is weak. There is a law of the mind, and a law of the members; sometimes one is uppermost, sometimes the other. This is the case with the majority of men, even in Christian lands. There are some really good people, going the right way, doing the right things: some really bad people, going the wrong way, doing the wrong things; but the majority are neither very good nor very bad: they alternate from half-virtues to half-vices.

I can put a watch on probation, and test its going day by day; if it gains or loses more than so many seconds, it is condemned. I can put a gun on proba-

tion, and say that unless it will shoot within so many inches of the mark at three hundred yards, it is condemned. I can put a boy on probation, and say that if he makes more than a certain number of mistakes at his examination, he cannot be admitted to college. But how can *mankind* be put on any one decisive probation? Shall men be tested by the number of sins they commit, or the number of good actions they perform? But some men are born with better natures than others, some have better influences around them than others, and therefore, if judged at all, each must have his own test. They cannot be tested as we test the watches, or the schoolboys, by any one fixed standard.

Suppose, then, that each man is tested by a sliding-scale, arranged not only according to his goodness and wickedness, but also according to his opportunities and advantages. Then it would follow that a pretty bad man who had had no opportunities, or poor opportunities, would go to heaven; and a pretty good man, who had not made equal use of his better opportunities, would go to hell. Then hell would contain many people much better than those in heaven. This is the dilemma. If only good people are to go to heaven, and only the bad to hell, then those will be punished for not being good

who have never had any opportunity of being so, and who could not help being bad. But if each man is rewarded or punished according to his efforts to do right, taking into account all the circumstances, then good and bad people will be mixed together in heaven, and other good and bad people will be mixed together in hell.

If heaven be a place, and hell another place, it is impossible to escape this difficulty. But if heaven be inward happiness and peace, and hell be inward dissatisfaction and unrest, then the difficulty disappears. Just so far as a man is faithful and true to his conscience and his heart, he enters into an inward heaven; just so far as he is false to it, he goes into an inward hell. The worm that never dies is conscience. No matter how prosperous outwardly one may be, so long as he is doing wrong his conscience gives him no rest. He may resist it, refuse to hear it, fight against it, but he cannot have any real peace while he refuses to obey it. *This* worm never dies. And the fire that is not quenched is the insatiate desire, the longing for content, which finds none and can find none in outward things. Insatiate desire is the unquenchable flame.

The conception of God derived from the teachings of Jesus, which has become a part of the common-

sense of Christendom, is that he is a father. Now, this notion of God as a father is utterly opposed to the usual doctrine of probation. Could a good earthly father put his children on trial in this way? Could he take his little ones and test them, as a manufacturer tests his goods, and, fixing an arbitrary mark of excellence, reject all that do not come up to it? No, ten times no! Those who are low down and far off are the very ones the good earthly and heavenly father cares for the most. The Son of God comes to seek and to save those who are lost.

Therefore, according to Christ and the New Testament, a man carries his heaven and hell with him in the state of his own mind and heart. A selfish, proud, vain, egotistical man, always thinking of himself and what he ought to have, always afraid that he shall not get his rights, *cannot* go to heaven. For heaven consists in forgetting one's self, and loving others; in rising out of one's self in reverence and worship for God and goodness; in living out of one's self for a great and noble cause, for truth, freedom, humanity.

Why, then, talk of going to heaven at all? Heaven is close to us all the time. We stand on its threshold at every moment. Why talk of going to

God? Is not God here, in this world, close to our heart, every hour, every moment? He stands at the door and knocks; and, if we are willing, he will come in. It is idle to talk of an outward heaven or an outward hell, unless we first escape the inward hell and go into the inward heaven.

The most real hell, and deepest hell, is selfishness; this is the great gulf fixed between the evil and the good, which cannot be passed over. As long as one is thinking mainly of himself, his own little successes and failures, his own small merits or demerits, so long there is a great gulf fixed between his soul and heaven. He sees Abraham afar off, with Lazarus in his bosom. He cannot enter into communication with noble souls, with the good, great, true, and pure; for he is himself too small and too mean for this. He has in him a worm that never dies, and a fire that is never quenched. He is consumed by insatiable longings. No matter what he has, he thinks he ought to have more; no matter how much he is honored and praised, he thinks he ought to be more honored and more praised; no matter what position or power he has gained, he thinks he ought to have something greater. Selfishness is never satisfied. It is a perpetual root of discontent. It is a hell which men carry in their own bosoms wherever they go.

Shall we say, then, that there is no outward heaven, and no outward hell? No; we may admit both. But these have their roots within; they are the fruits and results of the inward heaven and inward hell. A generous man draws to himself outward reverence, love, and honor; he lives in the warm atmosphere of love. A soul capable of self-forgetting reverence, looking up to what is higher than itself, is so ennobled and lifted up, that it comes into communion with what is great and noble, and eats and drinks with angels and archangels. We must first have heaven in the soul, and then we shall sit in heavenly places.

I know a woman, who has all her life been living for other people. She has not done this so much from conscience as from love. She has somehow been able to see something good in a great many persons. Wherever she has gone she has met with heroes and heroines. She has discovered something wonderful and admirable, where the rest of us saw nothing; for it is love which leads to sight. The most of us go from Dan to Beersheba, and say "It is all barren," because we have not the quick eye of love to see real goodness, the delicate sense of sympathy to perceive truth and nobleness. This lady of whom I speak has never been rich, has had to work hard to

support herself, has had nothing attractive about her position; but, nevertheless, she has lived in heavenly places more than any one I know. She has made acquaintance with all the best people. She has been attended by troops of friends. She has personally known, and that intimately, nearly all the people of her time with whom one would wish to be acquainted. Going to Washington to serve a friend, she saw Abraham Lincoln, whose acute mind looked through her somewhat pale exterior, and discovered the jewel within; so they two became warm friends. Now, this is an illustration of what we mean when we say that the outward heaven grows out of the inward heaven, and is its natural result. It is only the same thing which Jesus says, "Give, and it shall be given you: full measure, pressed down, and running over, shall men give into your bosom."

Therefore it follows that there are a great many different heavens, and a great many different hells, both in this world and in the next. There are also degrees in the happiness of heaven and hell, in this world and in other worlds. "In my father's house," says Jesus, "are many mansions." The law of variety, which prevails in this world, probably extends to all others.

But there is one element, not yet mentioned, which

throws a heavenly radiance over our life here, and which, if we may trust Paul, is to endure hereafter. It is Hope. We are all hoping, and on good grounds, to be better off to-morrow than to-day, better off next year than we are this. We are looking up, not down; forward, not backward. This lightens toil, sweetens labor, makes discomfort easy to bear. Every man, woman, and child must have something good to look forward to, in order to be happy. This something good may be more or less elevated, more or less distant. These human, earthly heavens are of a very different kind, as we can see; but life is worth very little if we have not some kind of a heaven to look forward to.

The child's heaven is the next half-holiday; the nearest hour in which he can play with his new toy, his top, his ball, his hoop. The little girl will be in heaven, so she thinks, when she shall be sitting on the floor with her little rag-baby, arranging its wardrobe. The poorest beggar-boy has, behind the house, in the muddy yard, a little structure of sticks and stones, which is to him a more wonderful piece of architecture than the Strasbourg Minster; and he falls asleep dreaming of the morning, when he can run out barefoot, and finish it. The good God has taken care that all little children, rich or poor, shall have

this heaven of hope around them; this heaven floating half an hour before them, with its romantic, poetic charm, its inexhaustible wonder and beauty. Children live by hope, and are happy in it. And, when the child goes out of this heaven, he presently sees another before him. A new hope comes up, to feed his life. It is the hope of getting on in the world, — of becoming a great man, a rich merchant with numerous ships; an eminent lawyer, doctor, politician; a poet of renown; who knows? Does not every bright boy believe himself a genius? Does he not expect to glorify his name, and to achieve, in a few years, eminent success? Do not laugh at the poor child, O cynic, with your bitterly earned experience! He must have a great deal of hope to begin with, for he has many cruel disappointments to endure. This is the outfit provided for him by Mother Nature.

"The young man puts to sea," says Schiller, "with a fleet of a thousand sail; he reaches the harbor an old man, escaping from his shipwrecked vessel, on a single boat."

The outward heaven and hell are fastened to the inward ones by immutable laws; but they do not come at once. "God," says the proverb, "does not pay us our wages every Saturday night." The good man may for a long time not reap the results of his good-

ness; the bad man for a long time may not taste the consequences of his sin. But they come at last; they may be slow, but they are sure.

A man, in a moment of temptation, commits some small offence. He takes what does not belong to him; he commits a breach of trust; he stains a little the purity of his soul. No evil consequences follow; the sun rises and sets as before; he enjoys life as much as ever. So he takes another step down, still with no bad results. At last the habit of wrong-doing is created; impunity makes him less cautious; he is on an inclined plane of ice, he cannot stop. Each new act of wrong-doing makes it necessary to perform another. Years pass on. The man is respected, esteemed, lives in peace and comfort; no one is more thought of than he. But the irresistible laws of the moral world are steadily bringing the punishment. As a detective policeman tracks his prey through the crowded street, never losing sight of him, so the outward hell is following surely after the inward hell. One day detection comes. His frauds, his crimes, are made known. Public indignation takes hold of him. Those whom he has cruelly injured cry out against him. His old friends cast him off. From the midst of prosperity and fortune, he goes down into utter destitution. Perhaps he is

obliged to fly to a foreign land, and live an obscure, lonely life ever after. Perhaps he goes to prison, his reputation forever gone, bringing disgrace on his innocent family, ruin on himself and all those most dear to him. This is the hell of outward punishment, which we have all seen, again and again, following on inward guilt. It is so in this world; why shall it not be so hereafter too?

Exposure, detection, disgrace; this is often the worst part of the punishment of crime. The prison and the gallows are not hell to an innocent man; they are often badges of honor. Paul in prison, Peter in prison, Tasso in prison, Bunyan in prison; these have glorified the scene of their sufferings, and men go to visit them as to sacred shrines.

"Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage.
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for a hermitage;
If I have freedom in my love,
And in my thoughts am free,
Angels alone, who soar above,
Enjoy such liberty."

The disgrace, the shame, this is the worst part of the punishment. But what can any exposure be, in this world, to the revelations which may come here-

after, when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed? We all deceive ourselves, as well as others. Who is ready to see even his own sin as it really is? how much less that others should see it! Who, then, can bear the revelation of the righteous judgments of God? None but such as keep their hearts pure, by constantly living as in the eye of their great Task-master; who search and try their ways, and turn to God in their heart of hearts; whose souls are fixed on him.

Churches and preachers are in the habit of saying, "Repent, believe, and obey, and you shall go to heaven." But the Apostle says, "Dwell in love, and so dwell in God."

We cannot keep ourselves wholly true and pure and generous by any effort of our own; but we can be kept pure and true by the Spirit of God, if we keep ourselves in God's presence. This is the great object and use of prayer. It brings God's truth and love into the centre of our being. Deeper than any plummet of thought ever sounded, it goes down into the depths of the soul. It feeds the roots of our nature with a Divine love. True prayer, which is looking up to God for good influence, is the only safe-guard against the hells of this life, and those which may be in the life to come. But all the hells in the

future life, as in this, are for the sake of heaven. They are all, in their very nature, temporal; for all evil is finite, and only God, who is good, is infinite. "He only has immortality"; and therefore we are told by the Psalmist, "If I make my bed in hell, thou art there." We very often make our bed in hell, thinking to be happier there than in heaven. But God's goodness appears in this, that he does not allow us to be at peace in hell; he will not leave our souls in hell. He allows us, indeed, to feed on husks; but it is that we may remember how much sweeter is our Father's house from whence we came out. So at last good shall triumph, and death and hell be both cast into the lake of fire and destroyed. Then shall there be a new heaven and a new earth; but it is nowhere written that there shall be a new hell.

The new heavens and the new earth, spoken of by the Seer of Patmos, intend a new faith and a new civilization, to come from Christianity. For one result of Christianity shall be to give us this new heaven and new earth. Christianity, even now, is gradually surrounding man with a new heaven and a new earth.

Gradually, not suddenly. The method of Christianity is diffusion. Its changes are vital, organic; not outside changes, but inside. It first changes the

root, then the blade, finally the ear. It is leaven, pervading the lump by slow degrees. It does its work thoroughly, therefore slowly. It respects the freedom of the will in nations, as in individuals. If men will not be Christians this year, it does not compel them to be so; it waits till next year. So the progress of the world is very slow to our eyes, and we see people now, as in the times of Peter, saying, "Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things remain as they were from the beginning of creation." There is no progress, say they, only change. But the answer of the Apostle is good now: — "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." Time is relative; it seems, even to us, to go much more quickly sometimes, and more slowly at other times. To an insect, which lives but one day, one day may seem as long as seventy years to us. To an angel, whose angelic life has lasted ten thousand years, our seventy years may seem only like half an hour. Philosophers say there may be creatures so small that what appears to us a solid rock shall be to them full of open spaces, so that it shall take them a large part of their lives to travel from one particle of the rock to another. And, again, there may be beings in the universe, whose range of vision is so immense that

the spaces between the stars disappear; and all the stars come together into one solid, shining mass. As with space, so with time. No doubt there are angels to whom the eighteen centuries which have passed since Christ came appear only like one or two days. Slow and fast, therefore, do not apply to these moral movements. The real question is, "*Does* the world move? Are the new heavens and earth approaching, or are they not?"

Christianity is making for this world a new heaven, and out of that a new earth. When we see new heavens, then we soon see a new earth. So long as heaven is believed to be a place, in some part of the universe, where God sits on a throne to be worshipped by his saints, who spend their time in praising him, while the devil sits on his throne in hell, in another part of the universe, superintending the torments of the sinners, — so long the earth will be regarded only as a scene of probation. Temptation will then appear behind every pleasure, and sin be hidden like poison in every happy home. Then it will seem man's duty to be wretched, and to make others so too. But when we see a new heaven, then we see also a new earth. Soon shall heaven be found to be, not a place only, but a state of mind; seen to consist in knowing God and man,

in loving God and man, and in serving God and man. Then we shall see heaven beginning in this life, wherever God is known as a father. Then shall we see that the Devil, if there be a Devil, can do us no more harm hereafter than he can here, because all his power consists in tempting us to evil. We shall see that when we resist he runs away from us, because the Devil is the greatest coward in the universe. Then shall the earth also become different, for the earth shall also be made new. Life will not seem bad, but appear good. There will be temptations here always; but God will open a way of escape out of them all. God is here, is with us now, is with us always; he is our father and our friend. The day dawns sweetly, the night closes serenely, with this new view of God.

We may say that the world has been made altogether new, and life wholly different, by the simple sight of God as the universal father. Jesus has shown us that God is not the God of the Jews only, but of all mankind; not of the good only, but of the bad also; not of the wise and great only, but of the humble, ignorant, and despised races and men. He is a father who takes good care of his youngest children; who follows no law of primogeniture, by which to give all his property to his eldest sons, but

who says "the last shall be first, and the first last." He is one who does not give the race always to the swift, or the battle to the strong; who does not keep his school as we ours, giving prizes to the bright intellects, and none to the stupid. He is one who keeps bringing up the rear-guard of humanity, and goes out to seek and save the lost sheep. He is one who gives as good wages to those who have wrought honestly one hour, as to those who have worked all day. This sight of a heavenly Father has worked on the world to create a different civilization. There is in it a tendency to unite men in a common mode of life. Out of the fatherhood of God comes the brotherhood of man. The new heavens make the new earth.

VIII.

SATAN, ACCORDING TO COMMON-SENSE AND THE BIBLE.

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THE common opinion is, that the Bible teaches that Satan is an archangel, who rebelled against God and fell from heaven; that he tempted Eve to sin, in the form of a serpent, and since that time has employed himself in trying to induce people to sell to him their souls. Now, there is nothing of all this in the Bible. This comes, not from the Bible, but from Milton's Paradise Lost. The Bible tells us that a serpent tempted Eve, but describes it as a real serpent, and does not intimate that it was the Devil in disguise. There never was a greater example of the wonderful power of a great poem than the way in which Paradise Lost and its pictures of heaven, hell, and paradise have been absorbed into the theology of the English-speaking race, and bound up with the Bible in their belief. Paradise Lost is the real Apocrypha of the English Bible.

Satan appears first in the Book of Chronicles as tempting David to take a census. But then the

Book of Samuel says it was the Lord who, in his anger, moved David to do this. To the Oriental nations the taking a census seems an act of vainglory, and is always considered dangerous. Here Satan simply stands for a temptation, not for a person. But he appears as a person in the Book of Job. He comes before the Lord with the other angels, who go about the world doing his bidding. He has a mission, like the rest, and he comes to give an account of it. He, it seems, is the critical angel, the fault-finding angel. His business is to sift character, to test goodness, to find out what a man really is. Naturally he has become rather sceptical concerning human goodness; he has seen so many men and cities, and found so many who could not bear his tests. He has known the dark side of life, and he doubts whether the colors of goodness will stand. That is all. He is no devil, hot from hell; his home is in heaven, among the other angels. The Lord asks him whether he does not think Job a good man. Satan doubts. He says, "It is easy for Job to be good. He is a rich man; he prospers in everything; he does not serve you for nothing." So Satan is allowed to test him by poverty, and he takes away all his wealth. But Job says, "The Lord gave, the Lord has taken away," and does not rebel. Then

Satan is allowed to try him with the test of pain and terrible disease. Job bears that too. Then came the friends to console him, and that was too much. It is not said whether Satan sent them as a final test, or not. It is very certain that Job's patience only gave way when they began to prose and to cant to him, and tell him he ought to say he was a sinner, and apologize to the Lord. That was more than Job could bear; and he broke out in a fiery torrent of noble, truthful, honorable, self-respecting utterances, which, as appears at the end of the poem, were entirely satisfactory to the Almighty.

Satan, in all this, we see, was only acting the part of a chemist, to whom a substance is presented to be analyzed by qualitative analysis. His object was not to tempt Job to evil; it was merely to find out what there was in him good or bad. You take a certain substance to a chemist, and ask him to analyze it. He proceeds to subject it to a series of tests. There are a certain number of alkalies, acids, or oxides which it may contain. The chemist applies one test after another, with which he searches for them. Sometimes these tests make known the presence of a substance by a change of color, sometimes by an effervescence, sometimes by a precipitate. He sends an acid into the solution to search for an alkali; he

sends an alkali to hunt for its acid. He applies flame, if it resists other re-agents, and the tormented substance is volatilized; that is, it flies up in vapor. So, at last, the chemist detects all the elements in the compound submitted to him. Satan, in the Old Testament, is just such a chemist. He is searching to find some falsehood in Job's religion. Job had been tried by prosperity; that revealed no trace of it. Satan then applied the test of loss, bereavement, poverty. Still no sign of the evil appeared; no change of color, no effervescence of anger. Then he applied the test of disease and pain, and still no evidence was seen of any flaw or falsehood in his sincere piety. Job did *not* serve God for wages, but from reverence and conviction.

In the New Testament, in the same way, Satan (or the Devil) appears as the critical angel who comes, as our text says, to "sift" men, to find out their weakness or their strength. In the temptation of Jesus he appears, applying three separate tests to see if there was any impurity in the heart of Christ. The first test is *food*. "Feed your soul," he says. "With your marvellous powers turn stones into bread. Feed your mind with knowledge, your heart with love, your imagination with beauty; use your gifts for self-culture." *That* test failed to show any

self-seeking. Then he tried another, addressed to "the last infirmity of noble minds," — the desire for esteem, fame, recognition, love. "Stand on the highest point of the temple, the object of admiration to the world, and show yourself borne up by angels." That also failed. No thought infirm colored the cheek of Jesus. Then he applied the final test, — power. He said, "Take *power*, to conquer the world and bring it to your feet. Make yourself the prophet of mankind, papal monarch of three worlds, viceroy of God, head of the human race, great captain, leading both Greek and Roman, Hindoo and Persian, sage and savage, to Jehovah." Jesus said, "I do not take power; I receive it, when God chooses to send it." All the tests had failed, and Satan departed. No trace of self-seeking had been found in that perfect heart.

We cannot think that these temptations came to Jesus from any personal devil. It was the temptation incarnated in life itself, — far more difficult to resist than any visible Satan. It was the temptation which came inevitably to Jesus as his faculties ripened within him and his work opened before him. There was necessarily an awful struggle in his soul, knowing his own vast powers, and seeing the vexatious limitations of circumstances. That the

hard, cold, pedantic Pharisees, whom he could annihilate, if he chose, by the breath of his mouth, should be allowed to defeat his whole work, and prevent him from bringing the kingdom of heaven to the poor in spirit, the mourners, those who labored and were heavy laden, — *his* poor, humble friends, — that was hard. If for one moment he could consent to do evil that good might come, to do a little wrong for a great right, to fight the Devil with fire, for a noble, divine end to use some worldly means, he would triumph over all evil and establish God's kingdom on earth. That was *his* temptation; but he resisted it, seemed to fail, died on the cross amid the tears of earth, and beneath the black sky of the melancholy heavens.

I do not think that Jesus considered Satan or the Devil as a personal tempter. In his prayer he says to God, "Lead us not into temptation." And in his advice to his disciples to watch and pray, he adds, "lest ye enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak." The inward source of temptation is not the Devil, but the flesh, or human desire; the external source is not the Devil, but the providence of God, who leads us where the temptation may arrive. That does not look as if he believed in a personal tempter.

Jesus mentions the Devil five times, and of these five he twice applies the word to human beings, — once when he calls Judas a devil, "Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" and when he told the Jews who opposed him that they were "of their father, the Devil"; meaning that the spirit of deviltry, or opposition, was in them. He uses the word "Satan" seven times; and in one of these cases he applies it to Peter, saying, "Get thee behind me, Satan." It was when Peter, urged by real love for his Master, wished him not to go to Jerusalem and die. "Take pity on yourself; do not go." That was all. But Jesus said to him, "You are my Satan now, my tempter. If you really loved me in the best way, you would wish to have me do my work, and die in doing it. You would strengthen me to go, even if I am to die; you would not weaken me." This we can understand. But it seems impossible, if Jesus believed in a real Devil, or Satan, from whom temptations come, that he could have called Judas "a devil," and Peter "Satan."

If Judas was a devil, if Peter was also a satan, it follows that there is more than one satan. In fact, every man has a different one from every other man. My satan is not yours, nor yours mine. Judas would not probably have been mortified as Peter

was by the laugh of the maid-servant; Peter would not have sold his Master for thirty pieces of silver. The satan of Peter was what we call, in modern language, Mrs. Grundy. It was fear of common talk, common ridicule, of what the people about him would say. He could fight with the soldiers, and cut off the right ear of an enemy; he could not bear to be laughed at by his friends or his companions. The same satan tempted him again, years after, when he was a pillar of the church; and again he fell. Paul describes it. Peter at Antioch associated with Gentile Christians, until the Jewish Christians, who hated and despised them, arrived; then he had no longer the courage of his opinions, and he pretended not to know them. But be not too severe on Peter. Do we never do the same? Are not we afraid of what people will say? The satan that sifted him like wheat is not yet dead; he sifts our souls to-day. Methinks we have known those who were on very friendly terms with people they met in the country or by the sea-shore, but who afterward, in other society, turned to them the cold shoulder. The love of human approbation, the fear of public opinion, the power of fashion, the dread of ridicule, — how often these make us afraid to confess our real opinions; how they make us deny with oaths that we ever

heard the truths which in our hearts we believe. Another satan came to Ananias, and "filled his heart to lie to the Holy Ghost." This was the satan of hypocrisy, who urged him to pretend to be better than he was. When poor Ananias was exposed, his pride received such a dreadful blow that he fell down dead. Our nerves are more tough. Exposure does not inflict any fatal injury now. Men of the first respectability are detected in swindling, in breaches of sacred trust, and they do not seem very much ashamed of it. Ananias cheated no one; he merely pretended to be better than he was. Are not we sometimes willing to seem better than we are, to take credit which does not belong to us? How often do we say, "I think it my duty to do this," when, in fact, it is only our pleasure to do it! How often we profess to make sacrifices for conscience, and take the position of martyrs for truth, when, in fact, our martyrdom is simply doing what we like!

The satan who entered the heart of Judas is commonly supposed to have been the very Prince of Darkness. Poor Judas has stood, for eighteen hundred years, on the summit of human villany; the past-master of all baseness and blackness of crime. It was only because he sinned against JESUS that it seems so. He had the awful fate of being able to

commit *his* treason against the Saviour of the world. But do not we sometimes betray our Saviour too? Perhaps Jesus comes to us to-day in a different form. He comes in a good cause, the cause of justice, humanity, right, but it is unpopular; we shall lose position, money, influence, if we adopt it, so we think it our duty not to adopt it. Perhaps we make a better bargain than Judas; we get, not thirty dollars, but thirty thousand; yet the principle is the same. Or, perhaps, Jesus comes to us in the form of our country, crucified between two thieves. Its public offices are seized by robbers; its sacred ballot-box, the palladium of its liberty, is violated by atrocious fraud. We are asked to give a few days every year to the service of the country, but we cannot leave our shops long enough even to go and vote. Yet we talk loudly of the blessings of free institutions; we brag, when we meet a foreigner, about our glorious republic. O Judas! you betray your Saviour with a kiss! The very men who say that women must not vote, because their sphere is at home in the kitchen, will not vote themselves. Where is *their* sphere, — in the cellar, or the garret? Their country is like the poor traveller who fell among thieves, and they pass by like the Levite and the priest; but when any Good Samaritan comes near, and wishes to help him,

they say, "O no! his sphere is elsewhere; let him go and help the people in Samaria!"

The day will come when all places of business will be closed by law on election day, just as on the Sunday; when cheating at the polls will be treated as worse than sacrilege or homicide; and when every man who does not vote will be punished by fine or disenfranchisement.

The satans of the New Testament are not all messengers of evil; they are often angels of good. Paul tells the Corinthians (1 Cor. v. 5) to deliver an offender to Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved; Satan, somehow, was to be the means of saving the man's soul. So Paul tells Timothy that he has delivered Hymenæus and Alexander to Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme; Satan, somehow, was to teach them reverence for sacred things. Paul had a messenger of a satan sent to him, so he says, to humble him, and to keep him from being proud. If Satan makes Paul humble, makes Alexander reverent, and saves the soul of the Corinthian church-member, Satan certainly cannot be all bad. He also is an angel of God. He may do us temporary evil, but perhaps we need it for our ultimate good.

The satans of the present day seldom appear in

hoofs and horns. They disguise themselves as angels of light. When they tempt us, they seem to be inviting us to some great and noble action. Satan sometimes comes as the angel Good-Nature, and pretends to be very sympathizing and friendly. But this good-natured satan may be our worst foe. He allows us to do wrong; he will not tell us the sharp truth we need to hear. He allows us to confirm all our bad habits by not honestly checking them in time. Then there is a *fault-finding* satan, of the opposite sort, who makes men worse by perpetually pointing out defects, always showing us our sins, never our goodness. He calls himself the angel of truthfulness, but he only tells half the truth. He discourages us, and destroys our hope. He sometimes ascends the pulpit, this gloomy satan, and tries to make us believe that God, the dear father, is as harsh and unrelenting as he is himself. He talks, in awful tones, of the exceeding sinfulness of sin; he tries to show that we are totally depraved, with no good thing in us. He insists that we hate God, and only deserve eternal damnation. He calls this the gospel of good news. But it is not an air from heaven, it is a blast from hell. The words of Jesus are indeed often full of warning, they point out danger; but they are never gloomy. They never dis-

courage. When this solemn satan meets a sinner, he says, "It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of God. God is a consuming fire." When Jesus meets the sinner, he says, "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee." Any gospel which discourages us is "another gospel"; the true gospel always brings good news, inspires hope, takes away anxiety, and so makes goodness less difficult, in making us happy.

There is also a satan of little things, a satan so small you can hardly see him. He is a little bit of a satan, pretending to be no satan at all. He tempts us to do wrong by saying, "O, that is of no consequence. That is a very little error. Do not be so puritanical. It is not *quite* right, to be sure, but it does not signify. It is only one pound, and you may bury it in the earth, and no harm done. You cannot do much, so you had better not do anything." He pretends to be the angel of modesty, this little satan. He says, "Do not put yourself forward, or volunteer to do anything for Christ; it will seem presumptuous." Then there is the satan of cowardice, who transforms himself into the angel of prudence; and the satan of meanness, who gives himself out as the angel of economy; and the satan of wilfulness and egotism, who comes in the robes of the angel of

self-reliance; and the satan of obstinacy, who disguises himself as the angel of firmness; and the satan of bigotry and intolerance, who calls himself the angel of truth; and the satan of cant, who pretends to be Divine piety.

But these are all allowed to come in order to probe us, to test us, to try us. They are the detective police of the heavens, who bring to light our inmost thoughts. In despotic nations, if a man is supposed to be conspiring against the government, the police come to his house when he is away, and search for hidden papers which may reveal his plots. They look under the carpets, they take up the floor, they sound the walls, they probe the cushions with long pins, they leave not a square inch of his rooms unexamined. So the satans of God search every corner of our heart, and bring to light our inmost purpose. They reveal us to ourselves; they show us what we are. We are to resist them, and fight against them, and yet be glad that they have come to fight with us. We must meet them in the armor of God, and so prevail.

God allows all these satans for our good, not for our evil. They come to test us, to find out what is in our heart. Perhaps this world is a great manufactory of souls, who are to be employed in noble

tasks afterward. In this world we are sometimes to be sifted and tried, just as a steam-engine or a rifle is tried before it is put to use. If there is a weakness or a flaw anywhere, it is best that it should be found out in good season, before it can do too much harm. In a gun-factory all the rifle-barrels are heavily loaded, and shut up together in a stone building and fired by a match. Some burst, and need to be made over again; some bear the test, and come out strong and safe. The rifles might say, "Why are we tempted in this way? Why are we encouraged to burst by this heavy load? Is it not a devilish attempt to harm us?" "No" is the reply. "You are tested now, so that you may show any flaw or speck when it cannot do much harm; so, hereafter, in the great war for freedom, on the battle-field of right, when you are to fight for justice and honor against evil, you may do good service for God and man. We test you now, that you may not burst then."

Thus the Bible view of temptation and the common-sense view turn out to be the same. The Bible says, "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trial of your faith worketh patience: and let patience have its perfect work." Temptation, which came to Jesus, which comes to all, is something which all need,

which is a good thing; only we pray, "Lead us not into temptation," meaning by that prayer any temptations which are too great for our present strength. A man conscious of any weakness ought to avoid temptation in that direction. If he knows that he is apt to yield to his love for liquor, he should abstain entirely. If he knows that his love for gaming, for the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, or any other evil, is very great, he should flee all such temptations for his life. The man who has found out what his besetting sin is does not need to be tested any more. Temptation has done its work in making him humble. Now he can pray, "Lead me not into temptation hereafter," and yet be glad that he has fallen into temptations which have revealed him to himself.

"Take then to yourselves the whole armor of God," says Paul, comparing our life to the deadly struggle of gladiators in the bloody arena, — that ye may be able to stand against the cunning of the Devil. For we fight not with men, — they are not our real enemies, — but with principles behind them and above them, —principalities and powers and rulers of the darkness of this world; with base ideas; with false notions; with ignorance and shams and cant and lies. Therefore take the panoply of God;

be clad with Divine armor from head to heel. Have honesty for your breastplate; for an honest purpose is a sure defence against temptation. Have inward truth, truth of soul, for your support, guide, and strength. Have your feet shod with alacrity of purpose, and readiness to rush forward against the foe, yet in the spirit of peace and love. And, above all, have the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. With such weapons we need never fear. All the satans of this world, all the satans in our own hearts, cannot conquer us while we trust in God, while we love his truth and seek to do his will.

IX.

CONCERNING THE FUTURE LIFE.

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CONCERNING THE FUTURE LIFE.

It is a fact, account for it as you will, that the disciples of Christ, after he had been put to death as a criminal, and seemed wholly gone from them, suddenly acquired a new confidence and a living hope. It is a fact to which history testifies, that they appeared to have no fear of death. They even courted it, and fell in love with martyrdom. They would not even speak of *dying* or of *death*, — with new ideas there came a new vocabulary, — they only said, "They have fallen asleep"; they called their resting-place a dormitory. To their minds, somehow, a bridge had been constructed over the great gulf which lies between this world and the next, and they saw God's angels ascending and descending along that celestial highway.

The epitaphs of the early Christians all have this celestial tone. They have no gloomy symbols of despair, but only signs of encouragement. "Here sleeps my dear wife Portia." "Rest in peace, Brother Caius." "She reposes here in hope." Such is the

spirit of the early Christian cemeteries. They lighten up the gloom of the catacombs with their words of confidence. The Christians in Rome could not lay their friends under the growing grass and beneath the sunshine; they had to hide them in the cavernous excavations below the city. But their triumphant faith filled those dark recesses with the light of a better day, and the Sun of Righteousness shone in there with healing in his beams.

According to the New Testament, *death is nothing*, and is not to be regarded as anything. The Apostle says that Jesus "has abolished death"; that is, has annihilated it. This accords with what Jesus himself says: "Those who believe in me do not die"; that is, death is nothing to them. Of course, Christians, like others, pass through the change which is called dying; therefore, when Jesus says "they do not die," he must mean that it has to them none of the character of death.

From this it would seem to follow that it is not the duty of a Christian to think about death at all, but only of life. Death is *night*, and the Christian lives in the day. "We are of the day," says the Apostle. The sun swallows up the darkness, and destroys night.

Nevertheless, it has often been taught in Christian

pulpits that we ought to think a great deal about our "latter end." But there is no *end* to life, "what seems so is transition." To spend our life in thinking about death is very much as if we should occupy the day in meditating upon the night. Let the night take care of itself, but let day occupy us with the works of the day.

In the little conversation between Jesus and Martha, after the death of Lazarus, Martha speaks of the resurrection as "the last day." Her mistake was, to suppose the resurrection something outward and distant, instead of something inward and present. When Jesus said to her, "Thy brother shall rise again," she responded, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection *at the last day*." The resurrection, so she thought, was to be "at the last day," at the end of the world. But Jesus answered, "I *am* the resurrection and the life," — an obscure answer, apparently. We see well enough how he is the life; his truth, his love, his influence, are the life of the soul. He is spiritual life. But how is he *the resurrection?* If the resurrection is, as Martha supposed it to be, something outward and remote, then it is very difficult to understand what Jesus meant by saying, "*I am the resurrection.*" But if the resurrection is the rising of the soul out of doubt and fear

into faith and hope, then Jesus is the resurrection exactly as he is the life; that is, his truth, his love and influence, are the resurrection of the soul, just as they are the life of the soul. In other words, the resurrection is spiritual resurrection, just as the life is spiritual life.

Outward death — what we call death — is nothing; it is merely the soul laying down its present instruments in order to take up others. It is stepping out of one body into another. The only real death is the *soul's* death; that is, sin, moral evil, ignorance, unbelief. The soul which lives in sin is a dead soul, dead in all its higher faculties. Christ comes to raise it out of this spiritual death into spiritual life, and then we say, "The law of the spirit of life, in Christ Jesus, has made us free from the law of sin and death."

When Jesus says, "He who believeth in me hath eternal life abiding in him, and I will raise him up at the last day," he does not mean "I will raise his body out of the grave at some future time"; but he means, I will raise him, ultimately, into a higher state of being. He means to say, He who believes in me takes my faith in God and man. To believe in me is to share my confidence, my hope, my trust in the Divine love. He who has this confidence has

in him now the principle of eternal life; and when I give him this principle I give him what shall finally and ultimately raise him into a higher outward condition of being.

But there are a great many persons, even in Christian lands, who do not believe in immortality. They believe in death, but not in life. Many of them are very intelligent and scientific people, like Dr. Büchner, the German, who has recently come to lecture to us, and who is the most determined unbeliever in God and immortality. Dr. Büchner is one of a class, not very common, who not only does not believe in God, but who thinks belief in God something which ought to be opposed. He considers it a great evil to have any religion. He stands just where Lucretius stood before Christ was born; thinking that the great evils of life are belief in God and in the soul, and that to teach that there is nothing but force and matter is the cure for all. Just as theologians have dogmatized and been bitter against all unbelievers, so atheists are now beginning to dogmatize and be bitter against all believers. In a recent number of the Westminster Review there is an article which shows this tendency in a high degree. It begins by stating that, so far as human reason can arrive at any judgment at all on the subject, Dr. Büchner appears

correct in his belief that a self-conscious existence hereafter "is an impossibility." Physical death is the termination of individual existence; that is assumed as something proved, about which there can be no doubt.

Now, if such a thinker asks us why we believe in a future life, and if he declares the immortality of man an impossibility, what shall we say?

I think we may say, first, that when one declares immortal life to be "impossible" he says what he cannot prove. It is certainly *possible* that men have souls as well as bodies. It is *possible* that souls may exist independently of the body; and, if so, it is possible that man may live hereafter.

Then we may go on and say, further, that the universal belief in a future life, in all times, among all races of men, under every form of religion, shows that it is the dictate of common-sense to believe it. Men are made to believe in immortality just as they are made to believe in right and wrong, good and evil, cause and effect, the finite and infinite. Some beliefs come to us of themselves; they are independent of argument; they are underived from logic; they are the natural outcome of human nature. If any belief can be called natural and human, it is the belief in a future life; for it is the most universal of

all. If you excavate the tombs in Egypt, five thousand years old, you find elaborate pictures representing the judgment of the soul after death. If you read the laws of Manu, received by the Hindoos one thousand years before Christ, they are full of descriptions of the state of the soul hereafter. The Romans and Greeks had their heaven and hell. The North American Indians have their happy hunting-grounds. The Mexicans and Peruvians have their paradise. Wherever man has existed, he has existed with an appetite for a future life and a belief in an hereafter.

Apart from Christianity, the wisest of men have believed in a future life on grounds of pure reason. That which Lucretius and Dr. Büchner deny has been believed and taught by Socrates, by Plato, by Aristotle, by Cicero, by Tacitus.

But Christianity does not convince us of immortality by any process of argument; it makes us believe in a future life by quickening all the immortal powers of the soul. It makes us live in the immortal part, and not the mortal part, of our being; in the spirit, not in the flesh. This is the real argument for a future life, — that we are alive now. The more of present life we have, the more shall we believe in the future.

If the soul of man is brutal, animal, material, if

it is occupied only with the outward world and things of sense, then it ceases to believe in immortality; it does not seem to itself to be immortal. But when it rises into the realm of ideas, when it communes with God, when it looks upward and not downward, when it is full of faith, hope, love, then it feels in itself that it cannot die, that death has no dominion over it. And this is the strongest of all proofs, — that to believe otherwise in our highest moods is impossible.

But beside the instinct of immortality, there are arguments for immortality very good in their place. We are made with reason, no less than with instinct. We are made to think, as well as to believe and feel. Consequently, the instinct of immortality needs sometimes to be re-enforced by arguments for immortality. Our faith in a future life does not *rest* on those arguments, any more than the walls of a great cathedral rest on its outside buttresses. The walls rest on their massive foundations, out of sight, hidden below the ground; but the buttresses against the walls are there to resist the thrust of the roof. So our faith in immortality rests on the instinct of life which God has given us; but arguments are buttresses to resist the thrust of doubts, of counter-arguments, of sceptical suggestions.

At the present time there are many persons who disparage the arguments for immortality, and, indeed, seem to think it rather selfish in us to wish to live hereafter. They argue that we have nothing to do with the future life, but only with the present. In a sense, this is true. But it is idle to suppose that men's thoughts can be shut wholly within the boundaries of the present life. We are too great for that, small as we are. We must sometimes think about an hereafter; and when we think about it, we need reasons and arguments for believing or not believing in it.

Now, the *arguments* for a future life are as old as human thought. It is not likely that any new ones will be invented hereafter. There is, for example, the metaphysical argument, based on the immateriality of the soul. Consciousness teaches that the soul is one; not made up of parts, like the body. It is indivisible. It is not one part of the soul which thinks, and another which feels, and another which loves, fears, argues, hopes, or hates. We say "I love," "I think," "I remember," "I choose," "I suffer," "I enjoy," "I intend to do this or that." It is one and the same person which is active or passive in all these separate states of consciousness.

But the body is not a unit. All matter is divisi-

ble, it is in parts; and one part is not another part. The man himself, the personal thinking being, is not composed of parts; therefore is not divisible, therefore is not material.

Let us suppose that I have a diseased nerve in some extremity of my body, which causes me great pain. I say, "I suffer from the pain in my foot." But now let the nerve be tied up between the brain-centre and the foot. The disease remains as before in the foot; but the pain which I felt I no longer feel. This shows that though the disease was in the foot, the pain was in the soul. Do you say, It was perhaps in the brain? But the brain is, by supposition, not diseased; and if the brain were diseased, the pain would continue. It is not, then, the body which suffers pain, but the soul. It is not the bodily eye which sees, but the soul which sees by means of it. It is one and the same monad which touches, tastes, smells, sees, hears, and which thinks, feels, and acts. Now, this argument is only a buttress, meant to resist the thrust of the doubt arising from the fact that at death the body is dissolved. Why not the soul too, we say? Because the body is composed of parts, and so is capable of dissolution. The soul is different, essentially different. It is not composed of parts. There is, then, no reason to think that it will be dissolved because the body is dissolved.

Another argument for immortality is called by metaphysicians the teleologic. This means that man is adapted by his nature to go forward and live hereafter. The law of our mind is that, when we see adaptation, we infer design. When we see that grass is adapted to be eaten by cattle, and that the taste and stomach of cattle are adapted to grass, we then infer that they were designed for each other. When we see that the eyes are adapted to light, we infer design. This seems to be one of the primitive laws of thought; we cannot go behind it. But the soul of man is adapted for perpetual progress. He goes on till he dies. He dies full of love, knowledge, hope. If man be made adapted to future progress after death; if he be adapted to greater love, knowledge, accomplishment, than he attains to in this life, — then it is natural to believe that the Creator intended him for it.

It has been said that the universal expectation of an hereafter is merely a fond imagination born from the love of existence, and that the wish is father to the thought; but this only puts the same argument into another form. Instead of saying that all men's minds are made to believe in an hereafter, we say that all men's hearts are made to desire an hereafter. But we find nowhere in nature any creatures made

with an instinctive desire without the appropriate food for that desire being provided. Each creature is born with a desire for some food, and for each creature the food he desires has been created. The bird loves to fly, the fish to swim, the mole to burrow in the ground. Some creatures are adapted to live on the earth or in it, some are adapted to the water, others to the air; and air has been made for the bird, water for the fish, earth for the mole. The senses enjoy light, color, form, melodious sounds, agreeable odors, pleasant tastes; and all these have been provided. If man has a capacity for a continued existence, and no continued existence has been provided for him, this is the only exception we know to the rule that every power planted in the nature of God's creatures has its appropriate sphere already designed and prepared for it in the very structure of the universe; for so has God loved his creatures from before the foundation of the world.

This longing for continued existence shows that the powers of the soul are not exhausted when those of the body are worn out. It also furnishes another argument to prove that the visible material body is not the soul. There is something in us beside these material particles, which come and go, which swim in the blood and enter with the breath. Beside the

body, which the senses perceive, there is that principle, that vital force, which organizes the body, coordinates its parts, makes unity out of its variety. The body, we repeat, is multiform, the soul uniform. The body which we perceive by the senses is made up of parts, of separate organs. But the soul, which we know through our consciousness, is a unit.

That the soul is different from the body has in all times and lands been the dictate of common-sense. Philosophers may prove, to their own satisfaction, that there is no such thing as soul, but only body; other philosophers may prove, with equal force, that there is no such thing as body, but only soul. The common-sense of the race accepts neither conclusion, but declares that man is a soul dwelling in a body, and that, when the body is dissolved by death, the soul continues to exist somewhere, somehow.

The belief in ghosts has been almost universal in all ages. Ghosts appear in the Bible, in Homer, in Virgil, in Dante, in all popular literature, among all savage and all civilized nations. Now, of two things, one: either these stories are *true*, and then they prove that the soul does not die with the body; or else they are *false*, and then they prove the universal belief that the soul does not die with the body. This belief must be very strong, since without facts,

and in spite of facts, it continues to maintain itself age after age. Such a belief is a proof of its own truth, for human nature was not made to believe so persistently in such a lie. Universal convictions must have their roots in some basis of reality.

But this faith in an hereafter, though universal, is a matter of degrees. Some believe more and some less, according to constitution, temperament, and habit of mind. Some have little hope in their constitution, and little sense of spiritual existence; they are like doubting Thomas, and find it hard to believe. They want the evidence of facts. If spirit-rapping be true, and if ghosts actually revisit the glimpses of the moon, — too often, to make night hideous with their foolish talk, — it must be for the benefit of these persons, who are not unwilling to believe, but only unable to do so. It is difficult to understand why we should be any more strongly convinced of a future life if all the tables in Boston should fly up into the air to demonstrate it. But when Thomas said he could not believe unless he could put his fingers into the print of the nails, Jesus allowed him to do so. If others need this sort of evidence, let us be glad that they can have it. I, for one, will not deny its possibility or its reality.

Not only is the power of believing in a future life

different in different individuals, but it grows stronger or weaker by exercise, like other powers. The more we live in spiritual things, in the love of truth, justice, and goodness, the more real does spirit become to us.

Jesus gives us confidence in God, and so inspires us with faith in immortality. He says, "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you."

He raises us above the limitations of now and here, he makes us commune with God, who is always and everywhere, and so lifts us up into a sense of immortal life.

When we once believe that God cares for us, that we have value in his eyes, then we are free from the fear of death. We can trust ourselves entirely to him. He is a faithful Creator. We can say, "Into thy hands, O Lord, I commit my spirit," sure that in his hands our spirit shall be always safe.

When we once believe in God, the analogies of this world strengthen our faith in another. See the boundless provision made for all God's creatures here! Every little creature has its wants provided for beforehand. Some are made with the instinct of flying; they enjoy movement in the air, and by a

wonderful contrivance, which all the skill and ingenuity of science fails to equal, the little insect will keep on the wing hour after hour without fatigue. The bird will fly all day at the rate of a mile a minute, journeying to his winter or his summer home. The fish enjoys life in the cold depths of the sea. The mole and the worm enjoy life digging in the earth. It is said by some physical philosophers that all movements on the earth, movements of air, of water, of growth, of decay, come from the influence of the sun. But the sun of the animated creation is enjoyment in the exercise of their faculties. Their sunshine is in their delight in doing what they are made capable of doing; and all creatures have their sphere provided for them, — air, earth, water. The bee is made to seek for honey, and honey has been provided for it. The whale was made to nourish his immense body with enormous quantities of minute vegetables and animals, and these have been provided for him. And these little marine insects have their homes too, and food and occupation and enjoyments. No doubt the Deity himself takes pleasure in the universal happiness of his creatures; and though we do not understand now the uses of pain, we shall probably one day see that it is a part of universal education, and that all present suffering

is the preparation for a higher capability of future joy. If we believe in the goodness of God, pain is an argument for immortality. We could live here without it, if this life were all. So it must be sent as a discipline beforehand for something beyond; as the child is made to study books which are of no present use to him, but the knowledge of which will be of use hereafter.

Insoluble problems are also evidence of immortality. We are all, in our mind and our life, brought face to face with questions to which no sufficient answer can here be found. Every generation of men comes in turn to look at these paradoxes, these antinomies of the reason. How can an infinite being create a finite world? What is the origin of evil? What is the relation between freedom and law, liberty in man and the providence of God? We are obliged by the law of our thought to ask these questions, and are unable to answer them. Do they not then vindicate an hereafter, where the solution will be found? Are they not like the sentence written at the foot of an unfinished story, — "To be continued in our next"?

What God has done for his creatures in this world he will do for them hereafter. We can trust him entirely then as here. He has made us with

longings for a continued existence; he has made the soul so that it does not grow old and decay with the body, but becomes more rich in knowledge, in love, in aspiration, in hope, as the body sinks away in disease. How often have we seen the soul struggling upward while the body was sinking downward; the body dying, the soul growing more alive! How often do men and women mellow and sweeten as they advance in years, rising to larger views, more liberal aims! How often, while the body grows older, does the spirit seem to grow younger, fresher, more active! Goethe said of Schiller, "He went on, and on, and on, for thirty-eight years, never resting, never ceasing from new activity and fresh accomplishments." Meantime, the body of Schiller was steadily decaying.

I often saw Dr. Channing in his last years. He never was so full of great thoughts and high purposes as then. Death, which already seemed to have taken possession of the feeble body, had no dominion over that ascending soul. I once saw, on a seal, the device of a sky-rocket, with the motto, "Dum vivo volo," "While I live, I ascend." Such was the spirit of Channing, of Schiller, of John Quincy Adams, of a great multitude of famous men, and men not famous, who continue to ascend as long as they live.

If the souls of our friends do not live after death, we should not, I think, be made to mourn over them as we do, to carry them in our hearts forever. We should be made to lay them aside, as we throw away a worn-out garment or tool, thinking no more of it. Our undying affections are proofs of the immortality of the soul.

I have a friend, perhaps, whom I did not know a few years since, or even a few months ago. Between his soul and mine there springs up a strong communion of thought, aim, and life. He goes away into the other world, and not one link of that chain of love is weakened. Year after year passes away, and I see him still by my side. I hear his voice, I look into his eyes, I feel his presence and influence. And will you make me believe that this soul of fire died with the body, — this soul, which continues thus to mould and influence me years after he has passed into the unseen world? That opinion requires more credulity than I am capable of.

It is a curious fact, that while, on the one hand, the men addicted to physical science and material studies have many of them lost their faith in soul, God, and immortality, and can believe only in force and matter, on the other hand there has sprung up a large body of believers who are confident that they

have physical and material evidence that the soul survives the body. I have devoted some attention to modern Spiritualism, and I find it not very attractive or very interesting. The messages purporting to come from the other world are rather weak sentimentalism, and do not seem to need that any ghost should come from the dead to communicate them. Nevertheless, the fact remains, that some millions of persons, of all characters, of all sorts of intellect,—poetic, prosaic, imaginative, commonplace,—are firmly convinced that they have seen and heard spirits from the other world. Since I believe in the continued existence of spirits after death, I have no reason to deny, beforehand, such facts. I think it highly probable that such communications may actually take place, though there seems to be some law which prevents any very effectual or useful intercourse. The net gain thus far seems to be, not that we have much more light on religion, morality, the soul, or God, than we had before, but that many persons who were before unable to believe in spirit or an hereafter now believe in both. They are persons who need physical evidence of spiritual things, and perhaps Divine Providence, in its infinite bounty, has seen fit to grant it to them, and so to counteract by physical and material evidence the decay of faith

which has come from relying too exclusively on physical observation.

But, after all, spiritual things are spiritually discerned. All the rappings and table-tippings possible will not produce a living conviction of the immortality of the soul. Jesus says, "If they hear not Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead." The materialistic philosopher cannot *see* the kingdom of God; it is necessarily foolishness to him. It is only by living with God, living from a sense of duty, living a life of love and generous affection, living an immortal life here, that we gain any lasting and stable faith in immortality.

Spiritism, or the doctrine of ghostly visitors, is, then, only a buttress, good to resist the thrust of material arguments against immortality. It is not a foundation on which to build our faith.

In a different way is Jesus the resurrection and the life. His influence makes us live in the things which are above. While we commune with him, we rise with him into that sphere of thought and feeling over which death has no power, and where the fear of death is conquered. Then we have no doubt about the immortality of others or about our own, no doubt as to the ascent of man after

death into a higher existence, no doubt concerning the protecting care and love of God.

> So, when life's sweet journey ends,
> Soul and body part like friends;
> No quarrels, murmurs, no delay, —
> A kiss, a sigh, and so away.

X.

THE NATURE OF OUR CONDITION HEREAFTER.

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Assuming the existence of God and of a future life, we ask, What are the probable conditions of that existence? We have only two sources of information: one must be found in the analogies of this life, the other in the teachings of inspired men.

Since this world and the world to come both proceed from the same Creator, and since he is the same always, we may properly conjecture what he will do for us hereafter from what he does for us here. Our reason teaches that the Divine laws are unchanging and universal; founded on no caprice of will, but rooted deeply in the nature of things. This world is a revelation of God's character, and his character remains the same forever. The next world must reveal the same character; and no manifestations of God there can contradict, though they may complete, his manifestations here. Whatever there is in that world new and different, it must be in essential harmony with all in this.

First, then, we may assume that space and time will continue, as the necessary conditions of the existence of finite things and the taking place of finite events. By means of space, things are kept apart and distinct; by means of time, events are kept apart and distinct. As long as anything finite continues, it must be framed in space and time. Take away space and time, and all things would rush together into the infinite and eternal. A universe, as distinct from God, requires the assumption of space and time; and we may assume their continuance hereafter, either as realities or as necessary forms of thought, — it does not matter which.

If space and time continue, then we shall be somewhere, and not everywhere, in some place, and not in all places, just as we are now. People sometimes imagine that, after death, we shall have no more locality, but be in all places at once. But we cannot think that we, or any being, except God, will ever be omnipresent. That is an attribute of the Infinite Being, not of finite beings. As finite beings we shall be somewhere, and not everywhere.. We do not mean by this to say that we shall necessarily be tied to one place, or be unable to move from one to another. We see a progress and ascent in this respect here. Trees are rooted to the soil; some animals are

fastened to certain localities. Man is limited to this one planet, Earth, but can come and go on all its surface. By means of electricity and steam he is gradually making himself at home in all parts of the globe. Hereafter, in the next state, he may be able to move with a thought from place to place, to be in a moment where he wishes to be. He may be able to think himself from the Sun to Jupiter or Saturn. But he must be in some place at each moment, not in all places.

So also it would seem that he must be in some point of time at each moment. In this life the stream of time carries us all forward together; so, I conceive, it will be in the future. We can, indeed, by a wonderful power of memory and of imagination, go backward and forward, and then the past or the future rises before us. So, hereafter, we may be able more wonderfully still to live in past or in future time, be present in spirit at the creation of worlds, be present and look on at the most interesting moments of human history. We may be able, by an act of will, to transport ourselves backward a thousand years, and go into a village of Europe in the ninth century, and see the actual condition of knights and serfs. We may be able to assist at the Crusades, or to see Mohammed in his cave, when flying from

Mecca. We may be able to go back and stand by the cross, and look in the face of Jesus, and hear with our own ears his blessed words of forgiveness; or, in the early Easter morning, see him when he comes from the tomb. We may be able to go farther back still, — to the Egyptian, Persian, Hindoo civilizations; listen to Confucius talking with his disciples, visit Abraham in his tent, see what the deluge of Noah really was, and learn whether there was one Adam or many; for this would, after all, be only an extension or increased degree of powers we already possess, and would not be more wonderful, essentially, than any act of memory. To be able to look at the past is, indeed, not more strange than to be able to see the present.

Here let us consider that, according to analogy, our entrance into the other world out of this will not be abrupt or startling. Think how gently we are introduced into this life! Thousands and tens of thousands of human beings find themselves existing in this wonderful universe, and are not surprised at it. They have come from non-existence into existence, and take it as a matter of course. No subsequent change that can befall any of us can be as amazing as this change from nothing to something. If I can bear this without wonder, methinks I can bear

anything. The greatest of all wonders is, that we do not wonder at beginning to be. We are so immersed in outward, visible objects, so full of active life, that we cannot stop to be astonished. By what wonderful provision is it that God softly rocks us into being, tenderly leads over this terrific and astounding fact of our passage from nonentity into actual existence? We may be sure, at all events, since we have not been astonished by this, nothing will ever be too startling. No change from something to something else can ever be so extraordinary as the change from nothing to something.

But we must not conceive of ourselves as lonely, isolated beings hereafter, not belonging anywhere. We must observe that the law of progress here, while it gives more freedom on one side, gives more permanence on the other. Man has greater freedom of movement than the lower animals; he can come and go as they cannot. But he also has more of a home than they have. They have their nest, their hole, their companions; but he has his house, his family, his relations, friends, companions, his place of work, his sphere of activity and love. Now it is probable, from analogy, that this will be the case hereafter. So Jesus intimates: "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told

you. I go to prepare *a place* for you." Jesus seems to have gone to prepare a congenial place, a sympathetic society; to call together in one Divine mansion elect spirits who would be ready to receive his disciples when they should enter that world, so that when they passed in they would be welcomed at once into a blessed company of friends assembled to receive them.

Every species of living thing which enters this world enters a home prepared for it beforehand by the providence of God. Fishes are born in water, where they find their food ready for them, and the element suited to their needs. Little birds find themselves in a nest, with parent birds to bring them their worms and cherries. The tiger's whelp, when it arrives, finds a mother as loving and as careful as if she were the gentlest of all tender creatures. Little children born in cellars have at first as soft a bosom to lean on, as careful arms to hold them, as sweet food for their lips, as the Spanish Infanta or the French Dauphin. The coral insect, coming into the world in a tropical sea, finds the necessary conditions of his little life arranged for him, — the water tempered to the right degree of warmth, and his food by his side.

And if God makes this preparation for every animal and plant born into this world, will he not have

our homes prepared for us, so that we shall not enter into a strange or lonely world hereafter? Let us look forward to a glad awakening in the other world. Let us expect to find ourselves received into a home there, among groups of friends, wiser, nobler than ourselves, so that among them we shall be once more like little children, to be guided, taught, led, tenderly cared for. As we open our eyes in the new life, we shall look into answering eyes of gracious tenderness and heavenly radiance. Soft voices will murmur welcome. As mothers here purr and coo and sing cradle-songs to their infants, so the first sounds which enter our ears hereafter may be the same sweet voices of musical love. There will be nothing abrupt, strange, or startling. As we find ourselves in this world without any amazement, and take it as a matter of course that we should be here, so we shall not be astonished at arriving at the next stage of being.

Our homes hereafter will probably be a step in advance of our homes here in being adapted more perfectly to our higher wants. Many families in this life, while full of natural affection, do not meet in any full affinity or high communion. They do not always understand each other. With the most conscientious purposes, they are often unjust to each

other. With the best intentions, they often fail of comprehending each other's real motives. Thus there may be perpetual friction, — the sense of hindrance in one's home, and not help. These are the tragedies of life, — persons who are brought together by birth, by habit, and by natural affection, who yet do not meet intimately, who have no real intimacy of mind or heart. Perhaps the homes hereafter will be arranged according to deeper affinities than these. Those who belong to each other will come together. Then each will contribute to the common peace and progress, and there will be that real communion which consists in perfect sympathy and mutual understanding.

Nor need the old relations cease when these new ones begin; for these came from a deep root. All love is of God, and will endure. We need not fear that our friend whom we have loved so much here will leave us there for some higher society with which he has more affinity. We sometimes hear this fear expressed, that our friends may have gone up so far as to have passed quite away from our reach. But can we fail to see that it is the nature of Christian love to be able to come down in deeper sympathy with all below, as it ascends in fulness of life to loftier attainment above? Jesus Christ, the

loftiest of all souls ever seen on earth, — with whom did he commune, whom did he love, whose society did he choose? Babes in intellect, infants in virtue, publicans and fishermen, Martha, Mary, Lazarus. Not many wise, not many noble, were chosen by him, but persons standing in the lowest plane of spiritual attainment. They were honest, unperverted, pure in heart, that was all. And when he rose, and ascended to his Father, did he leave them behind? No; but he said, "I go away, and come again to you. I will not leave you comfortless. I will come again, and receive you to myself, that where I am there ye may be also." If the homes hereafter are higher homes than these, they are still made for us, that we may go into them, and be lifted by them to a higher life.

It will be observed that we have assumed, all along, that the future life is an advance on this one, and an advance of which we shall all have the advantage. This is the lesson of analogy and also of revelation.

So in the resurrection, as everything else ascends to a higher plane, our love must ascend too. It will be a higher, purer, deeper, larger love. It will be less self-seeking and more generous. It will reach out more widely, and sympathize with a greater va-

riety of God's creatures. It will go down more deeply, to seek and save the lost ones. It will rise up in a purer aspiration to God. But because it does all this, it will not lose its hold on its old friendships, for it never does that in this world. To go up spiritually is not to go away from any one. To go up nearer to God is to acquire the power of going down with him into the lowest parts of his creation. The perfection of God consists in his power of going down into the infinitely small, as well as up into the infinitely great. Christ rose higher than any other being, and so was able to sympathize with and to love those who are too low down for any one else to love. To separate one's self from those below is not to go up as Christ went up. Consequently, if our friends have made great progress in the other world, and have become far higher than we, they have acquired thereby the power and wish to come nearer to us in sympathy and help than ever before.

We must not believe in two places only hereafter, heaven and hell. It is not likely that all are to go either into perfect joy or unmitigated sorrow. This is a very crude and irrational notion, founded on the literal interpretation of some phrases of Scripture which our prosaic theologians have not had imagination enough to understand. God has made this

world infinitely diversified with every degree of being, — a long scale of musical gradations. Is God's law in this world a law of variety, and is his law in the other world a law of monotony? Has he a million different conditions for his creatures here, and only two there? Believe it not! The other world is, no doubt, as full of variety as this. It has an outward nature as rich in air, earth, water, light, fire, plants, vegetables, as this, our old familiar world; only more graceful, more lovely, more various, more sublime, more tender. So, long ago, Milton wrote: —

> "What if earth
> Be but the shadow of heaven, and things therein
> Each to other like, more than below is thought?"

The old theory was based on the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats. It was inferred that there are only two classes in the other world, saints and sinners; only two places, heaven and hell. But while each parable teaches some one special truth, all truth is not put into each parable. The particular truth taught by the "sheep and goats" is, that those who have never heard of Jesus — the Gentiles, or heathen — will be judged according to their fidelity to the law in their hearts, which is a law of universal love. The essential difference between men is

that they are selfish or unselfish. This parable declares that all generous, unselfish people are essentially Christians, whether they ever heard of Christ or not.

But Jesus says explicitly, and without a parable, that there are many different conditions in the other world, as in this. The law of degrees prevails there as here. If we expect all to go into one place when we go into the other world, I think we shall be mistaken. There will be a special place for every one to be born into there, as there is here. Every child born into this world comes into a home of its own; has its own father and mother, brothers and sisters, its own nation, country, town, language; he is born in the country or city, among the mountains or by the sea, into the home of a farmer, a mechanic, a minister. One little child is born in Spain, one in India, one in New England. Each of us, as we pass into the other world, will go into a particular home there, suited to us, and which we are suited for. It is said of Judas that "he went to his place," the place that suited him, the place where he belonged, the place where it was best for him to go. So the Apostle Paul went to *his* place, the place which suited him, the place where it was best for him to go. All this is not only scriptural, but reasonable; so

reasonable that Jesus seems to think it almost unnecessary to tell us of it. "In my Father's house are *many* mansions: if it were *not* so, I would have told you."

We are also told that while a good deal of what we learn in this life will pass away, much will remain. "We know in part, and prophecy" (that is, teach) "in part; but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part will be done away." But there are three great elements of spiritual life which remain: faith, hope, and love.

The faith which abides is not any particular creed or belief; but it is that confidence in God, that trust in universal law, in the order of the universe, in a pervading, providing intelligence, in a blessed fatherly love, which is at the root of all intellectual activity, all intellectual progress. This faith is the "substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." It is the spring of all thought, reaching out from the known to the unknown. We go into the other world believing that there is there plenty to know, that the laws of nature and the facts of nature are infinite and inexhaustible; and that this faith is to abide in us proves that the other world *is* like this world in its inexhaustible opportunities for knowledge. There, as here, there

will be infinite variety, boundless adaptation, facts of observation for the senses, beauty for the imagination, problems to be studied, deeper mysteries of science. There will be something corresponding to sunlight, to stars and moon, to ocean and mountain, to forest and meadow, to summer and winter. This little world has not exhausted the creative power of God. We here see but the border of his works, and listen to but a faint whisper concerning him.

Faith abides, and so also hope abides. And if so there is something to hope for; that is, there is progress hereafter, as well as here. When God puts hope into the human heart, it is a promise of progress. When we are told that hope abides, it is a promise of perpetual progress. To give us hope, with nothing to hope for, would be to deceive us. But the hope of something better is the spring of activity. Therefore, in the other life, there is not only plenty to know, but also plenty to do. What the work is, we do not know; but as the other world is a higher world, so the work there is higher than here.

It would seem as if much of human work in this world is merely a training of our power of work on unimportant labors, to prepare us for those of real value. If we have been faithful over a few things, we shall be rulers over many things. Ninety-nine

hundredths of human labor here is directed to procuring food, clothing, and shelter for the body. We might have easily been made so as to need neither food, clothing, nor shelter. All creatures have to work for the first of these objects, some for the first and last; man has to work for all. Is not this intended to train his working powers, so that they may be exercised on something higher?

Lastly, we are told that love abides; and, if love abides, the objects of love must also abide. The continuance of our human love is one of the best evidences, not only of immortality, but also that we are to know our friends again, and be with them again, in the other life. Else why this undying memory of our loved ones, this aching void, never filled?

The animals have an intense love for their little ones, but after a few days they forget them. They are better off than we are, if we are not to meet again those who have left us. The cow mourns her calf for a day or two, and then an end. But after twenty, thirty, fifty years have gone, the father remembers, with a pang of longing, his little child; the mother carries her infant in her heart till she goes to meet it. We may change toward the living, but not toward the dead. Living friends may be false to us, or we to them, but —

"The love where death has set its seal,
Nor age can chill, nor falsehood steal,
Nor rivals disallow."

If we had no other reason for believing it, then the fact of this deep-rooted love and this incurable sense of loss, "this scar of a deep-stabbed woe," should be enough to convince us of the recognition and new communion with those who leave us. But if in the other world we did not remember our friends, there would be no reason to believe we should remember anything. When the old man's memory goes, from the decay of his body, he forgets dates and names, forgets recent facts, forgets recent acquaintances; but the last thing he forgets are those whom he loves. If, therefore, we should not remember our friends hereafter, I think we should not remember anything. And if we did not remember anything, it would be no immortality of the soul, no continuation of the same personal life.

In this world we can only look on nature from the outside; perhaps then we shall be able to see it from within. Have we not all had the feeling — in looking at the ocean, at mountains, at a summer landscape, at the midnight sky — of something which we long to get at, but cannot, hidden within and behind what we see?

Wordsworth continually refers to this instinctive longing which we have to penetrate nature, to go below its surface. We have senses here by which we perceive the sensible phenomena of nature, the beauty of form, grace of motion, color, light and shadow, perfume, music. In the other world we may have other faculties given us by which to perceive other phenomena which are now absolutely hidden for want of some perceptive faculties. There may be whole worlds of phenomena hidden in nature, which will open upon us when we have a spiritual body with new senses, just as the world of form and color would open on a man born blind, or the world of melody open on one born deaf, if these senses should be suddenly awakened.

This, I think, is what Paul means by the resurrection of the body. It is the rising up of the body, the ascent of bodily life, the access of new bodily powers. Every year, in a thousand churches, the resurrection of the body is spoken of as though it meant the same material particles rising again out of earth. But this is a low, material, earthly view of the doctrine. "Flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption." "That which thou sowest," Paul distinctly declares, "is *not* that body which shall be."

The resurrection of the acorn is an oak; it rises up in a higher form. So man rises up from the grave in a higher form. "It is sown in corruption," that is, in a decaying form; "it is raised in incorruption," that is, in a body which will not decay. "It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power." The resurrection of the body is the rising up or advance of the bodily organization of man from corruption to incorruption, from weakness to power, from dishonor to glory, from a body which weighs down the soul to one which expresses it, manifests it, and obeys it entirely.

The other life, then, we are taught by inspiration as well as by the analogies of nature, is a higher life for all. It is, therefore, a good thing for all to die, when the proper time of death arrives. It is not good to take our own life, as Mr. Francis Newman recommends, and for two reasons: first, if we intrude where we are not invited, we shall not be likely to be welcomed very cordially. To be met in the other world by the question "Who sent for *you?*" would not be very agreeable. Then we may not be sufficiently prepared to go up into a higher life. If we wait patiently till God sends for us, we may be sure that it will be a good thing for us to die; but if we go before we are sent for, we may find ourselves wholly unfit for that state.

When we say that the future life is a higher condition than this to all men, we do not mean that every man there is better and happier than every man here. The sphere of a man in this world is higher than that of a dog, yet some dogs may be better and happier than some men. But if the souls of animals ever become men, that will be a resurrection, a rising up, to all of them. All, good and bad, will rise to a higher plane of being and higher conditions of existence. In the same way we may believe that all men will rise, at death, into a higher plane of being and higher conditions of existence. Not that all go into heaven, nor all into equal and eternal happiness, but all go up and on into a higher sphere. It is a rising up to judgment, as well as to joy; a rising up to the sight of God's truth and holiness, as well as to that of his love. Still, it is rising up. The soul which has deadened itself here, hardened its conscience to the truth, convinced itself that there is no God and no future, rises out of that degraded state when it comes to see the great realities of eternity. It rises to condemnation, remorse, shame, but it rises. Better for it to see the truth, no matter how hard it is to bear, than to remain forever blinded to it. So, all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man at last, and come

forth, — come out of the graves of unbelief, of selfishness, of sensuality, of falsehood, in which they have buried themselves, or out of the soft sleep of a life spent in faithful and generous toil. They shall all hear the voice of "the Man," the human voice of Christ, and shall ascend to a higher plane of truth and love. Therefore, even to those who go into the other world selfish, impenitent, hardened, and without any sense of religion, it is an ascent; for they go to judgment, to see themselves and to see the truth. They have hardened themselves against the truth in this life; they have closed their eyes, and shut their ears, and hardened their hearts here, until it has become impossible for them to be converted and healed. But when they enter the other world all is changed. The illusions of this world pass away. They can no longer deceive themselves. They see themselves as they are, and God as he is. This is really progress, advance; the only and essential progress.

The resurrection of the body does not mean that the same body comes to life again, as many foolishly suppose. Paul says, "Thou fool, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain." The analogy of seed and plant was given us to help us to understand this. You take some poor, black-looking, dried-up

seed, and put it into the earth. The first thing which happens is that it decays, that nearly all of it decays and dies. But this death of the envelope liberates the germ. Now it begins to grow. It puts out its two little leaves above; it sends down its little roots below; it moves into the air and light. Exquisite, delicate leaves unfold and swing gently in the soft air. A bud arrives, and swells, and opens into a lovely flower. That is the *resurrection* of the seed. It is not the same seed coming back again, but something higher coming out of it.

Common-sense and common observation teach that all things are advancing, that the law of the universe is perpetual progress. The latest theory — that of Mr. Darwin — seeks to legitimate by science this universal law. The central idea of Darwin is that only the best things survive, and so that all nature is constantly going up from good to better. It is a theory of hope. To be sure, it is not science; for science is knowledge, and this is theory. But so far as it goes, it goes in the steps of revelation, and preaches the law of hope and progress.

Christianity, in its Scriptures, does not enter into the details of future existence as other religions do. The Persians, the Brahmans, the Egyptians, describe

minutely the state and occupations of the soul in the other world. All this Christianity leaves untold; its revelation is for this world. It brings God to us here. If we feel his presence and his love now, we shall have no doubt about immortality. God, who has made this world so rich and so fair, who has arranged it so for all our needs and wants, who has given us here so much to know and love and do,—he will take care of us also there. Christ makes us believe in immortality, not by telling us about its details, but by filling us with faith and trust in God. So he strengthens and quickens into fuller life the natural instinct of immortality. See that little child walking with its father through the streets of the city. All is strange to it, all new. He does not know what is coming next, where he is going next; but he walks happily on, holding his father's hand, looking at everything, enjoying everything, without fear. But if, perchance, he loses for a moment his hold of his father's hand, and finds himself alone in the crowd of strangers, he utters a cry of terror, and a great fear rushes over his little heart. So it is with us as we walk with God through his universe from world to world. As long as we hold his hand, as long as we have our Father near us, we are satisfied with the present, and enjoy what is around us,

and do not ask what is to come next. It is only when we let go his hand that a great terror of the future rushes over us, and we are afraid before the uncertainties and darkness of death and the unknown worlds beyond.

XI.

COMMON-SENSE VIEW OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

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XI.

COMMON-SENSE VIEW OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

THERE are a considerable number of intelligent men and women who think that the Christian Church is of no use at the present time, whatever it may have been formerly. Their reasons for thinking so, so far as I have heard them, are such as these: "The Church," they say, "is behind the times in its doctrines, its methods, and its aims. The need of to-day is not worship, ceremonies, ritual, but knowledge and work. The newspapers, the magazines, the lyceum, have taken the place of the Church as a teacher. The various philanthropic and benevolent societies have taken its place as a worker. Once, doubtless, the Church taught the people the most which they knew; but now *the press* is the teacher of the masses. If you wish to worship, why go to church? Why not go to the woods, or into the fields in the summer, and worship in God's own temple? Why not go to your room, or closet, as Christ commanded, if it be winter, and read some good book, or meditate on God's wonderful world?

"The Church," so say these critics, "is not only behind the times as regards its work, but is a drawback on the work of other people. It opposes reforms, opposes science, is afraid of progress; it is the dog in the manger; it does not do its own work; it leaves the poor, the vicious, the slave, the intemperate, the prisoner, to be taken care of by others, and finds fault with the temperance men, the Abolitionists, the reformers who come to do what it has neglected. The condemnations pronounced by Isaiah on the church of his time, and by Jesus on the church of his time, and by Luther on the church of his time, and by Wesley and George Fox on the churches of their time, are still true; and we may say, as they said, 'It is iniquity, even the solemn meeting.' 'It is better to stay away from church than to go to it.'"

I have tried to state the argument fully and fairly. Why be afraid of criticism? Let us welcome it. If any one can find fault with what we are doing, let us be glad to hear it. It is best that such objections should come out; then, if false, they can be answered; if correct, they can be made use of to help us improve. Schiller says, —

"My friend aids me; my foe also is useful to me,
The one shows me what I am able to do; the other what I ought to do."

Let us at least be ready frankly to admit that the Christian Church is, and always has been, an imperfect institution. It is quite capable of being improved. Others may call it the Bride of Christ, the Ark of Safety, the Pure and Holy Mother of Souls, the Infallible, the Spotless Body. Let us be satisfied to call it, as Christ did, a body of disciples; that is, a company of scholars met to learn. They are ignorant, therefore needing to be taught; they have many faults, and need to correct them. They are a body of boys and girls, with open minds and hearts, wishing to be instructed. You do not find fault with a school-boy because he is ignorant: that is his qualification for being a scholar. What we want in a scholar is ignorance. The man in the fable, who would not go into the water till he knew how to swim, is the type of those who will not join the Church because they are not good enough to be Christians. By and by, they say, when we have learned to swim, — that is, when we have become pious, holy, charitable, without the Church, — then we will join the Church.

No, the Church has always had faults enough, and has needed always to be found fault with. It needs it now. We ought not to complain of that. But what we are able to show is, that, with all its faults,

it is a useful and necessary institution; an institution whose roots run down so deep into human nature that it cannot be abolished; an institution which, in its worst form, does so much good, and helps mankind so much, that they will never willingly let it die.

If any one has fault to find with the Church, and thinks it of no use, let him consider how deeply rooted its needs are in the nature of man. It cannot be destroyed. If it comes to an end in one form, it springs up anew in another. Cut down the old trunk, new shoots spring up from the root. It cannot be destroyed; for some sort of a church is needed by man for his moral life, growth, peace, comfort. Therefore the only question is, Will you stand apart from it, or take hold of it and help make it better? It is easier, no doubt, to stand apart from any institution, and criticise it from the outside; but it is better to study it sympathetically, and try to improve it. Those who think it faulty are the very ones who ought to try to make it better.

Some persons, we have said, have come to the conclusion that the Church is of no use; that it is a dilapidated institution, well enough once, but now quite behind the age, and soon to be superseded by newspapers and philanthropic societies. They there-

fore will have nothing to do with it; they will do nothing to make it better; they simply let it alone. What they do themselves, they of course would think it right for others to do. Indeed, on their principle, this is what all ought to do and will do. That which is dead ought to be buried, and put out of sight. Let us, then, suppose this done; the result brought about at which they aim, and which their course naturally tends to produce. The Christian Church, then, has ceased out of the land. Its temples are no longer opened on the Lord's day for worship. There is no more meeting for common-prayer, for praise, for songs of thanksgiving, for listening to the words of Jesus Christ, for instruction from the pulpit in truth and duty. The twenty thousand pulpits, which now, once a week, call men to recognize the presence of God in the world, are silent. Soon Sunday becomes like any other day. Work, amusement, the cares of life, which are now shut out for a few hours, one day in seven, by this little embankment which we call Sunday, — these rush in, and all of human life becomes one monotonous course of working, eating, sleeping, society, study, amusement. No solemn sense of the Divine Presence comes in with the opening morn of Sunday; no words reminding us that we are not wholly of this earth, no words filled with immortal

hope, come to nerve the heart and soul. Little children are born, and no baptismal blessing is laid on their brow; our dear ones die, and are put into the ground, and no prayer ascends over the grave. Soon, also, the Bible loses its power. Being no longer publicly read, being taught no longer in the Sunday school, being no longer explained and enforced in the sermon, it will gradually take its place with other good books, and be read as we read them. It will not any longer be the law of Christendom, a Divine law, to be appealed to in behalf of justice by the oppressed; a law to rebuke the tyrant and elevate the slave; a law keeping the public conscience enlightened and sensitive to the distinctions of right and wrong. Will newspapers take its place? Will the place of prophets and apostles be fully supplied by those young men who are obliged to write in haste an article for to-morrow's paper, whether they know anything of the subject or not? Will the lyceum platform supply its place, — the platform which, no doubt, often preaches noble sermons, and often becomes a true Christian pulpit, but which is obliged more frequently to entertain and amuse its hearers? The lyceum can hardly devote itself to teaching the eternal principles of truth. Will science take its place? Science is knowledge; religion is

faith, hope, and love. Will a treatise on algebra or chemistry take the place, to a child, of his father and mother? Light is one thing, life another. It is the business of science to communicate light to the intellect; it is the work of the Church to bring the soul to God in submission, faith, obedience, love; to God, the source of LIFE. Will the progress of civilization make the Church unnecessary? Civilization means the increase of wealth, and so of luxury; the multiplication of railroads, cotton-factories, steamships; it means cheap postage, cheap newspapers, all the inventions and improvements which make our outward life more comfortable and more ornamental. But decorate our outward life to any extent, multiply luxuries to any amount, you still feel the inward want, never satisfied, of something higher; you still need something to love, something to love you, something infinite and eternal, lasting amid all change, the end and object of all being. Civilization tends to separation. It tends to separate class from class, to divide the rich from the poor, the cultivated from the ignorant; it constantly emphasizes more and more the differences between man and man. We need something to make us realize our common humanity; and that we chiefly feel in the presence of God, before whom all human distinctions fall down.

The Church alone places us in the presence of God; it alone gives unity to our life; it makes all men one, whether they be rich or poor, high or low, saints or sinners, wise or foolish, learned or ignorant, masters or servants, refined or coarse, successful or defeated; for all are one before God. Without a church, democracy is probably impossible; for the Church is the only institution which teaches equality and fraternity on an everlasting basis. It says, "Call no man common or unclean." It says, "Are ye not all brethren?"

It appears, therefore, that those who think the Church may be ignored or dispensed with probably take a narrow view of the matter. Though they may be educated and cultivated, they have little real sympathy with the great masses; they are, perhaps, acute, but they are certainly shallow. I mean, of course, shallow and narrow as regards this point. They are not in fellowship with that human nature which, in all lands and all times, demands a worship of the Invisible which rises always above the seen to the unseen, which humbles itself before the Most High and is exalted, which finds itself lifted up by casting itself prostrate before the Eternal Truth and the Infinite Beauty.

The Church is as permanently founded and rooted

in human nature as the state. It springs up of itself everywhere, whenever man begins to rise above the savage state. Confucius has his church; Buddha has his church; Zoroaster has his church. They have all existed during twenty or thirty centuries, based wholly on the need of social worship. They rest on the deep instinct which makes men feel that they are stronger, better and wiser for going together to worship before God. The worst church is better than none, just as the worst state is better than none. A bad government is better than anarchy. A bad church is better than to live without God in the world, because that is sure to end in brutality and moral death.

The Church is the home of the poor, the comfort of the sufferer, the friend of the oppressed, the support of the dying, the hope of the bereaved. It comes to those upon whom society has laid heavy burdens, and takes them by the hand to raise them up.

Will philanthropic institutions take its place? Each of these is based on the right of some one need of society, of some single work to be done. All are founded on the principle of division of labor. But we need one central institution, all inclusive, which shall give unity to all; which shall supply motive-power to all by awakening conscience, which

shall supply also a common law for all in the ethics of the New Testament, which shall give unity to all by making all responsible to God and all dependent on him.

Just, then, as the state is useful because it protects the property and the person of all men, and maintains social order; just as the school is useful because it gives to all that knowledge and intelligence without which a free state cannot exist; just as the press is useful to throw light into all dark places, and concentrate public opinion on all abuses; just as benevolent and philanthropic societies are useful to meet every special need and sorrow, — so the Church is useful to keep alive in the whole community the sense of God's presence; to teach responsibility to him, the invisible witness of all our actions; to inspire faith, hope, and love toward him, the universal Father. It so furnishes the only means of giving unity to life, and of preventing society from falling into anarchy and mutual opposition. This is the central force, the regulator of civilization, and without which no advanced society seems possible. The savage state may exist without a church; but civilization divorced from some religious institutions is apparently impossible.

We have been speaking of the Church in general.

What we have said includes the Catholic and the Protestant Churches, and all forms of Protestantism from the most orthodox to the most radical. The formula of the Church universal is given by Jesus when he says, "Where two or three *meet* together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Two or three meeting together anyhow, anywhere, in the spirit of Christ, — which is the spirit of filial love to God and fraternal love to man, — they make a Christian church.

But now, having attempted to show the mistake of those who think the Christian Church is an outgrown institution, we must add some criticisms to those already expressed. The Church is strong enough to bear a great deal of criticism, and will be better for all sincere and serious suggestions of its defects and needs. When we are satisfied that, in its essential substance, it stands firm on the rock of human nature, we shall feel ready to examine and criticise with perfect freedom any of its local and temporary defects.

Let us then take an impartial look at our existing churches.

What is a church for? Some persons think that it is one with the right genealogy, regularly and properly derived from that one originally founded by

Christ. They examine the title of a church as they would that of an estate; they search for flaws in it; they think that it is no church if there is anything wrong in its constitution. A family may be living in the undisputed possession of a property. Their father had it before them; their grandfather before him. But their great-grandfather did not get a perfect title to it, his lawyer made some mistake in drawing up the deeds; therefore, now they must give it up, and lose it. Just so some people think about the Church. Here is a good church, full of good Christians, the pious souls of men and women, dear little children, all on their way to heaven, as one would say. Not at all; their minister was ordained by some one who was ordained by some one else, who was ordained by some one who did not get *his* ordination from the proper person. There is a flaw in the title; so it is no church, after all; so they are not Christians, or at least have no "covenanted mercies," no real right to trust in God's love and grace. This is the idea some people have of a church.

Others, again, think that the true Church is the one which teaches sound doctrine. A true church is the one which is correct in its theology about the origin of evil, which takes sound views of the nature and extent of Total Depravity, which holds an orthodox

view of the Atonement. It is true that this only means that the minister of the church accepts Dr. Wiseacre's theory about these deep matters rather than that of Dr. Newman; for the members of the church probably know nothing about these points one way or the other. No matter. If their minister is sound, they are sound, — sound all through. If he is unsound, so are they. The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church once cut off four synods, and excommunicated forty thousand church-members, because the majority of the ministers in those synods were supposed to hold wrong views concerning the origin of evil.

But there is another view of the true Church which is a little different from this. It is that it consists of those who love God, and love Christ, and love each other, and who desire to become purer and better. This union of souls may not be sound in the faith; may have a very imperfect sort of organization; may have no connection with popes, cardinals, or even bishops; may not have a single theory, good or bad, about the origin of evil; may not know what to think about the Trinity; may be blind as moles in regard to the Atonement; but if they are honestly desiring to do God's will, then, according to this view, they are a true church of Jesus Christ.

Those who belong to this church of seekers and disciples may not be nearly as good as those outside of it; but they are seeking to become better, and they have in their souls a principle which will make them better.

Some people imagine the true Church to consist of good people only, persons who are all pious and holy, all as pure and free from sin as possible. They ought to be all regenerated saints, little lower than the angels. But there is no proof of this in Scripture. Sinners, not saints, were those who kept company with Jesus, and with whom he kept company. He gathered around him a church of sinners, when he was in the world. That was the standing charge against him. Afterward the church of the Apostles was not much better. It had in it those who had been thieves, liars, and adulterers, and had to be warned all the time against these vices. "*Lie* not one to another, brethren, seeing ye have put off the old man and his deeds." "Let him that stole, steal no more, but labor with his hands." They even became drunk at the communion at Corinth; some of them did not believe in any resurrection of the dead. Peter dissembled, and acted falsely, and Paul rebuked him. Paul and Barnabas quarrelled, and could not get along together, and had to separate.

There is no evidence that the Christians at first were much better than others.

Gamaliel was probably a better man than the Apostle Peter; and Marcus Aurelius Antoninus was a better man than half the Apostles. The difference in favor of the Apostles was this, that Gamaliel and Antoninus had got as far as they could go. But Peter, James, John, Paul, and every Christian soul had a principle of faith and purpose in their souls; a living conviction which would carry them up and on a very long way.

A currant-bush once said to an acorn, "What an insignificant little thing you are! *I* bear currants, and am a large bush!" "Yes," said the acorn; "but wait awhile. I have a germ in me that is to make of me a great tree, larger than ten thousand currant-bushes."

The Roman Catholic Church has done and is doing a good work. It has helped to purify, educate, and civilize the world. It is based on permanent principles of human nature, or it could not last as it has lasted. Its one great sin has been to seek to domineer over the mind instead of instructing it, to drive instead of to lead. Its sin is pride, by which the angels fell; and it has not repented of that sin. The Church of Rome has never said a single word to

show that it repents of the Massacre of St. Bartholemew, the persecution of the Albigenses in the south of France, the expulsion of the Huguenots, the horrors of the Inquisition, the wholesale massacres of Tilly in Germany and Alva in Holland. I honor the Church of Rome for all its great and noble works, but I pray that it may remember, before it is too late, the saying of its Master to another church older than its own: "I know thy works and thy labor and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them that are evil; and for my name's sake hast labored, and not fainted. Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember, therefore, from whence thou art fallen, and do the first works, or else I will come unto thee quickly, and remove thy candlestick out of his place, unless thou repent." A church must repent of its sins, no less than an individual. If a church professes to be infallible, and always right, then it cannot repent; and so, sooner or later, unless it gives up this pretence of infallibility, its candlestick must be removed out of its place.

The Protestant Church came, in the providence of God, because it was needed. The rights of the individual conscience had been crushed under Church authority, and they needed to be established. Good-

ness had been derived from outward conformity, instead of inward faith in great truths. Protestantism came to teach the rights of man, and that the one thing needful was an inward principle of goodness in heart and life.

An Episcopal divine in New York has recently pronounced Protestantism a failure. If Protestantism is a failure, it is so for the same reason that Catholicism is a failure. It is because it has imitated the Church of Rome, tried to drive instead of to lead, set up little popes instead of the great one, left its first love, which was freedom of thought, and sought to fetter the human mind again by creeds and by ceremonies. Therefore has come a new Protestantism protesting against the old, — a Protestantism of common-sense. It has come in the form of Unitarianism, Swedenborgianism, Universalism, Spiritualism, Transcendentalism, Radicalism. These are all more or less narrow, but they are all necessary as steps to something better.

If an intelligent Buddhist monk, who had always lived in a monastery in Thibet, should land in Boston, he would, no doubt, be much interested in our activities and industries. We should take him to Lowell to look at the factories, to the navy-yard to see our iron-clads, to our hospitals, to our public

library, to our grammar schools, to the Latin and Normal schools. We should show him State Street, explain to him the nature of a bank, and the methods of the post-office; take him to the State House and the City Hall and the court-rooms, and make him understand the threefold cord of government, — legislative, executive, and judicial. So six days pass, each bringing some new astonishment; at last Sunday comes, and our Buddhist is surprised to find a great change in the aspect of things. Shops, offices, banks, courts, State House, City Hall, are closed. No newspapers, or few, appear; no theatres, and few railroad trains. The streets are quiet; the trucks and drays which crowd them at other times are absent; the roar of the factories is still; the hum of the school-house is silent. Instead of this, the churches are open, and groups of quiet citizens are entering.

Our Buddhist asks the meaning of this, and is told that while, in ancient times, a tenth of the property was given to the gods, we consecrate on the altar of our religion a seventh part of our annual income; for time is money. This day belongs to Christianity and the Church: we devote it to reading the commands of God, the history of Christ; to teaching the community the laws of justice, mercy, truth, purity, benevolence, temperance, piety to God, charity to

man. Our other institutions are for some particular purpose; this is for the purpose which includes all the rest. It is to teach pure morality, to awaken and enlighten the conscience. Our schools are to make the people intelligent, to give the knowledge which is power; but the Church is to teach them how to use the power for their own good and that of other people. To other places people go for special objects: those who wish amusement go to the theatre; those who desire instruction go to the lecture or public library. Children go to school; the sick go to the hospital; the poor and old go to the asylum. But to the Church all come; here, and nowhere else, all classes in the community meet, — the rich and poor, wise and ignorant, young and old. In other places particular evils are considered and remedied; here alone *all* evils are considered, and here alone is perpetual battle waged against sin in all its forms. In other places we act on men by force and by law; here, only by the power of reason and of love. Conviction and affection is the aim of everything here.

When our Buddhist friend hears this statement, I think he will be much pleased, and will say, "This institution which you call the Church is the noblest thing I have yet seen. This is the crown of your whole civilization; this gives unity to all the vari-

ety; this makes God the centre and axis round which all else revolves. How fortunate you are in having such an institution, to bind your whole state in one harmony of united belief and action! How dreary would your society be if these churches should be closed; and with what joy must your whole community join in these grand meetings of universal brotherhood!"

"Well, not exactly," you would be compelled to reply. "No; there are a great many persons who do not belong to the Church, never go to it, take no interest in it. These are often some of the most intelligent people. They think there is no more need for a church, no use for it, that its work is over. Instead of going to church, they stay at home and read, or, in the summer, walk in the woods. In fact, they rather pride themselves on having outgrown the Church."

"But," says my Buddhist, "do they think it would be better to have *no* Sunday rest, *no* Sunday worship, *no* Sunday meeting of all parts of the community, *no* Sunday instruction of the people in justice, honesty, charity, *no* teaching of the Bible to the whole community?"

"I suppose they must think so," you reply; "for if it is a good thing for *them* to stay outside of the

Church, it must be a good thing for others. If they have outgrown the Church, it must be a good thing for others to outgrow it."

"I can understand," says the monk of Thibet, "that a man might think it well sometimes to stay at home and read, and sometimes to go into the fields on Sunday. But this institution you describe is so noble, so necessary to unite all the people on the deepest and highest ground, so necessary for their education in the fundamental principles of justice and mercy, that I cannot see how any one can be uninterested in it. If you did not have such a harmonizing centre of life and love, you would have to create one. But this you have, resting on a religious foundation, established by ancient usage, confirmed by its vast uses, justified by the needs of society. How can any one be indifferent to it?"

Here, however, you put in a word for the come-outers. "The fact is," you say, "there are practical defects in our churches, which have justly displeased many persons. It is not exactly the bond of union I have described. The Christian Church is broken up into twenty or more large sects, each one claiming to be right, and declaring the others to be wrong. They have nothing to do with each other; each is trying to destroy the rest, and swallow them up. Ro-

man Catholics declare all Protestants to be wrong, and on their way to destruction. Protestants say the same of Catholics. Episcopalians say "*The* Church," meaning that the little fraction of Christianity which belongs to them is the whole of it. Baptists say that no man is a Christian who has not been covered up with water once in his life in a solemn manner. We have not one church, but a great many; and I grieve to say that they are contending and quarrelling with each other, instead of uniting in one great war against the sins and evils of the world."

"That seems to me very wrong," says the Buddhist, "and, more than that, very foolish. If your Church is a house divided against itself, your Master says it cannot stand; or, at least, it will fall if it be not built on a rock. But surely all your churches stand on Christ, and teach the same things. I have read your Gospels, your Sermon on the Mount, those beautiful parables of the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son. This is what all your churches teach, I suppose; so they must all do good."

"Yes; they do read the Gospels," say you, "but then they do not preach a great deal about them. They spend most of their time in teaching the 'Trinity,' the 'Atonement,' 'Total Depravity,' 'Everlasting Damnation,' and the like. So they have not

much time left to teach love to God and love to man."

"But," says the Buddhist, "what words are these? 'Trinity!' 'atonement!' 'depravity!' I do not see these in your Bible. I thought Christ came to teach salvation, and to say, 'Heaven is at hand.' He did not come to teach damnation, and say, 'The kingdom of hell is at hand!' I see now why people stay away from church. But one thing I wish to understand. I went into a church one day, and I saw the people sitting in little boxes, each shut up in his box. I wished to go in, but no one asked me to go in. There was a great deal of room, but I stood up a good while, and no one said 'Sit down with me'; so I thought it was because I was a Buddhist, and I went away."

"By no means," you hasten to say. "They treat Christians in the same way; they only wish for those people in the churches to come and be taught religion who are able to buy seats."

"But are they the only ones who need religion? What becomes of all those who have no money? You have schools for every one, rich or poor; schools free to all. Poor children, in your country, can learn to read and write. Is it not as important for them to learn to love God and man? You keep every one

from working on Sunday, rich and poor; I should think you would have churches open for them all."

"I begin to understand, now," continues the Buddhist, "why your people do not care enough for the Church. You say Jesus made a church which was to teach every one how to do good, and be good, and to make all men one. Then you say that only people shall come to it who can pay money; that only those who believe as you do can belong to it; and instead of teaching trust in God, hope and love, you teach things which no one can understand. But if I were a Christian, I tell you what I would do. I would not go into the woods, and say I did not need any church, because I was so wise; but I would try to have a *good* church, where all men should be brothers; where they should be welcome, no matter what they believed, if they wished to be good men and women; where, instead of talking about hell, we should talk about heaven; where, instead of saying "*our* church," we should say "our elder brother, Jesus Christ"; and where our work should be to do as much good and get as much good as possible." Thus spoke my Buddhist. And this seems to me to be the common-sense view of the Christian Church.

The Church of Christ is the greatest of all human institutions, and the most necessary of all. Other in-

stitutions have a local and temporary work; this has one always the same, — the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. In all lands and times men need to be taught the love of God and man, need to be told of the great laws of right and wrong, need to have the conscience quickened and enlightened. But in a country like ours, *where the people govern*, they need, more than anywhere else, to be perpetually taught the laws of morality and religion. This is the only power which can balance the centrifugal force of freedom by means of the centripetal power of right, — the only power which can permanently keep the state and nation one. If we had no such institutions as church and Sunday, all good men would have to unite to invent them. But it would be very hard to do so, — harder still to put them in practical operation. But, now we have them, have them established in the belief and the habits of the people. It is the height of madness not to make the best possible use of them.

Jesus declares he shall build his Church on the declaration of Peter that he is the Christ; and Paul says that the Church is built on the foundation of apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. But other foundations have been laid. Some churches have been built on an infallible

priesthood, on sacraments, on Calvinism, Methodism, Unitarianism, Episcopacy, Universalism, Baptism, Presbyterianism. These have been made the real foundations instead of Christ. The result has been that men have been asked to come to Christ provided they will come in the Baptist way or Methodist way; to believe in Christ provided they will believe also in some particular creed; to become followers of Christ if they will follow him after the methods of Wesley, Calvin, Channing, or Theodore Parker. Hence Christ is divided, and we have many members, but *not* one body.

The Apostle Paul, with an exact insight which demonstrates the reality of his prophetic inspiration, has stated beforehand the true theory of the Church. The human body is the type of its unity and its variety. Unity in variety is his motto. One body, many members. The Roman Catholic Church has pushed the unity so far as to destroy the variety. Protestantism has pushed variety so far as to destroy unity. This is the fundamental evil in the Christian Church to-day.

Another great and ruinous defect in the Christian Church is that it has been a church of the clergy, not of the people. It is professedly and avowedly so in the Romish Church; there the priesthood *is*

the Church. It is virtually so in Protestant churches. Milton said, "New presbyter is old priest written large." The whole direction is left to the ministers, and they, being theologians, make theology the main thing, and that chiefly a speculative theology. Not till the people take the direction of the Church will it be directed toward life, and identified with daily duty, with work and play, with study, literature, science, art, nature, sanctifying all with the sense of a Divine presence, vitalizing all, and giving unity to all.

The Church, thus far, has had more dread of novelty than desire for progress. It remembers the things behind, and forgets those which are before. We saw recently an account of a discussion in the House of Bishops of the Church of England on a proposition to discontinue the use of the Athanasian Creed in the service of the Church. The Archbishop of Canterbury gave as a reason for retaining it, that no one believed it, and so it could do no harm. Not one of the bishops contradicted him; not one said that he believed it. Yet many, perhaps the majority, were in favor of retaining it; that is, they are in favor of continuing to say in the solemn worship of God what they disbelieve. Their reason was, that if they leave this lie out of the service, they may

be asked to leave out something else which is true. This is what may be called the "entering-wedge argument," which is very effectual against all improvements. The argument is, that if you do now what is right, you may by and by have to do what is wrong. If you tell the truth to-day, you may have to tell a lie to-morrow. If you admit a necessary and useful reform, you may have to encounter a dangerous revolution.

But, notwithstanding all this, let us say that there are many hopeful signs of progress and improvement in the Christian Church. In New York, for example, appear every week two newspapers, both nominally Orthodox,* both of which are edited in the interests of a broad, free, practical, and generous Christianity. We can ask nothing larger or more liberal than these journals, which are read each, every week, by half a million of people. We constantly meet with ministers of different sects who are in full sympathy with all progressive, liberal, rational, and practical Christianity. The time has come, thank God, when Unitarians and Universalists can no longer monopolize the title of liberal and rational Christians. Party walls are crumbling; sects are becoming confounded and intermingled. So far from the Christian Church

* The Independent and the Christian Union.

being outgrown and done with, it is more needed to-day than ever, to be a centre of union to all those who desire to serve God by serving man. Our partial reforms are all proving themselves inadequate and unsatisfactory. You cannot make men temperate by temperance societies alone, by prohibition or license laws alone. You cannot cure pauperism by any number of benevolent societies, or poor-house laws. You cannot permanently help the wretched, the suffering classes, the vicious, by any solitary efforts. All these are good as far as they go, but they will not wholly cure one of the evils of society. This, all true reformers are beginning to see. They see that a profounder influence is needed, — an influence which shall make society ONE, which shall do away with the cold separation of class from class, cure the selfish isolation of our lives, and place us in human relations one with another. And only such an institution as this can be realized when the Christian Church shall become all that its Master meant it to be. This will come when his disciples shall be all one with him as he is one with God.

We must, then, fully believe in the Christian Church as the one great need of our time, provided that we do not mean by this any little Christian sects or great Christian sects, however much they may call

themselves by high-sounding names, and pretend that they alone have the keys, and the access to God. By the true Church let us understand that great united, free, practical union which is yet to come, in which there shall be neither Trinitarian nor Unitarian, Episcopalian nor Methodist, but only those who love God and man. Not till that great union of humanity arrives will the world be converted to Christ and every knee bow to him. Not while sects and creeds arise like walls to divide disciples from each other can the world see the face of Jesus and learn to love him. But the hour cometh, and now is, when neither at Jerusalem nor on Gerizim, neither in this sect nor in that, shall men worship the Father. And till that time comes let all men do their part to hasten its coming, not by standing outside of the Church and finding fault with it, but by going into it, and trying to make it what it ought to be.

XII.

FIVE KINDS OF PIETY.

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I THINK it unfortunate that we should usually consider piety as something unnatural, to be grafted on human nature by a special experience. We must therefore begin by showing that all men have in them the elements of piety; that all men have also the power of cultivating it; and that it is only by this culture of piety that man can advance or make real progress in any department, either in this world or any other.

Piety means love to God; but then, each man's idea of God differs from that of every other man. By God we mean the highest we know, the wisest wisdom we know, the best goodness we know, the tenderest love we know; and all these carried to their perfection in one infinitely wise and good, holy, loving, and lovely Being. But some men's idea of wisdom is more profound than that of other men. Some men's idea of goodness is more elevated than that of other men; therefore their ideas of God must greatly differ.

A missionary, born in the innocence of a New England village, educated in our schools, churches, and colleges, who has been taught uprightness of soul by the sight of his father's perfect integrity, who has been taught purity of heart by the knowledge of a mother's saintly virtues, goes at last to preach to cannibals in the Feejee Islands, and teach them the worship of the true God. They are docile, we will suppose, to his instructions. They say, "He is a good man; he has come a great way to teach us." So they accept his doctrines, listen to his prayers, repeat them after him, join his church if he asks them to do so, are baptized, profess religion, and are sincerely desirous to believe and do all he says. But their idea of God is not and cannot be the same as his, because their idea of goodness cannot be the same. They have been taught treachery, cruelty, licentiousness, from childhood, by all surrounding influences; *he* has been taught the opposite. They worship, nominally, the same God; but they and he worship, really, two very different beings. He lifts them indeed to a higher idea of God by his own life more than by his words; for human goodness is the best mediator of Divine goodness. But, lift them as much as he may, he can never lift them so high as to see exactly the same Being whom he sees himself.

We love God when we love the highest and best thing we know; that is, when we look up, not down; up to the Infinite, not down to the finite; up to goodness, not down to wickedness; up to truth, not down to error. By thus looking up to what is higher and better than ourselves we refresh our souls, we purify our hearts, we open them so that Divine influences come in.

A man of piety, therefore, is essentially one who believes in and who loves goodness. A man without piety is one who either does not believe in it or does not love it. The natural culture of piety, therefore, consists in looking up, not down, — looking up to good things, not down to evil things; in contemplating truth rather than error, right rather than wrong, nobleness rather than meanness. Every good and generous act done by man makes it easier to love God and to believe in him; every lie we tell, every act of dishonesty we perform, makes trust in God more difficult, not only to ourselves, but to others. Such great scandals as have recently occurred in the financial world not only make men doubt of human honesty more, but also distrust Divine truth. Every bad action which men do makes humanity seem less lovely, and so makes it harder to love, not only the brother we have seen, but also the God we have not seen.

We see why piety is essential to all real worth. A man without piety is only a part of a man, and is incapable of growing into anything better. A man who never looks up to, adores, reverences superior goodness, has in him no spring of improvement.

But there are different kinds of piety, some higher and better than the rest. These we will now proceed to consider.

I might omit the piety of fear, because this is no piety at all. It has been believed sometimes that the root of all religion is fear. Lucretius, the Roman poet, who was an atheist, held this view. Many infidels now contend that all religion is fear of God, and that only by getting rid of religion can we escape the dominion of this slavish superstition. No Christian holds this view. All Christians teach that we are not truly converted till we love God. But many think we must begin the religious life by fear; that fear of hell is the necessary step toward the joy of heaven. And this element of fear, which plays so large a part in the beginnings of religion, in the first awakenings and convictions of the soul, is apt to hold its dominion all through, and is never quite transformed into love.

Fear is a mighty motive, and produces great results. The fear of the Lord may often be the be-

ginning of wisdom, or right conduct. But we can safely say that it cannot exist as an element in true piety. We may be afraid of sin, and ought to be. We may be afraid of temptation, afraid of ourselves; but we must not be afraid of God. "Perfect love casts out fear," even fear of sin and fear of temptation; and the first spark of genuine piety casts out the fear of God. If I am afraid of any one, I cannot love him. Love creates confidence, and so casts out fear. We may confidently say, therefore, that the love of God which has fear mixed with it is of the very lowest kind.

Next above this, very universal in heathen religions, and not uncommon in Christian religions, is a sacramental and liturgic piety, chiefly sentimental, which affects the soul like a strain of music or the perfume of flowers. This kind of piety prevails most in the sacramental sects. It depends much on association and circumstances; it rises high in an oratory, where the dim religious light comes through a painted window and falls upon a hassock of crimson velvet; higher still in a grand cathedral, amid gorgeous ceremonies and superb music. This kind of piety is a good step toward something higher; it is one of the landings on the stairway of ascent to God. It is well sometimes to bathe one's soul in

this religious atmosphere of forms and ceremonies. I have often sat in Catholic churches, and listened to the solemn music, seen the procession of priests in their vestments, and watched the colored light falling through ancient painted glass upon kneeling marble figures and richly carved pulpits. One dreams a religious dream in these places, which is sweet and helpful. These forms and ceremonies are useful accessories to piety, provided one does not consider them as essentials. But when we regard any particular forms of worship, any particular church, as of vital importance, we relapse out of Christianity into heathenism or into Judaism. Then a man puts church and ceremony in place of God, and worships not the Divine Spirit, but the material form. There is a good deal of this heathen and Jewish piety left in Christianity, especially in the sacramental churches.

Next comes an emotional piety, which depends on religious excitement. It requires sympathy, and cannot live alone. It is awakened by earnest appeals and exhortations, by flaming images of danger and ruin, by glorious visions of celestial joy. It rises to high tide in a revival, and floods the whole country with its wide-flowing waters. Then it sinks away, and leaves great marshes with stagnant pools

here and there between. This kind of piety is most fully developed in the Methodist Church, as the sacramental piety is chiefly in the Roman Catholic and Episcopal Churches.

Then there is a doctrinal piety, in which fear and hope are mingled, which has its root in strong doctrine. The two constituents of this are an outward hell and an outward heaven. The feeling toward God is such as we have seen entertained by a timid wife toward a tyrannical, arbitrary husband. There is a real, though low, sentiment of love in it, made up of reverence for power, awe for will, and admiration for greatness. This is the piety which comes from Calvinism pure and simple.

There is still another form of piety, which is founded on the sight of God's wisdom and goodness as seen in nature and Providence. In it God seems a beneficent law, a grand and wise order, a kind, overruling providence, a divinity around us and within us. The sources of this piety are God's works in nature, studied reverentially and profoundly. The priests of this religion are men of science, actuated by the pure love of truth. There is a certain scientific sanctity about such men which we cannot but admire. They are unworldly men, devoting life to the service of truth; careless of

wealth, ease, comfort; going to Brazil, Cape Horn, Australia, the Arctic regions, the burning and pestilential plains of Africa, in pursuit of knowledge. They spend long years in painful study, minute observation, laborious calculation, to discover God's laws. This is the religion of men of science, noble and pure. Its defect often is not to see God within the soul as well as without; and not to recognize God as a personal friend as well as an infinite order.

In all these forms of piety there is something good and true. The imaginative and sentimental piety of the High Church is true, for we are partly beings of imagination. The emotional piety of the Methodists is true, for we are also beings of sympathy and feeling. Calvinistic piety, which sees in God an infinite personal will, a sovereign ruler, certainly awakens reverence and zeal. The religion of Calvin has done a great work in emancipating the soul from all other fear than the fear of God. It has made martyrs and confessors of religious and civil freedom in all lands. And the piety of science, founded on a sight of law, is also very valuable, though much undervalued. It creates a genial warmth, pervading all of life, and moulding modestly and gradually the whole charac-

ter. Latent heat is just as important as uncombined caloric; and so that latent, pervasive piety, which sees divine laws in all of life, is as important as the more demonstrative kinds.

If these varieties of piety could be combined in one kind, omitting their defects, we should have the highest kind of all. If we could have a solemn awe and fear of sin and its consequences, as the basis of religion; beautiful, harmonious rites and ceremonies as the helps to piety; the sympathy of human hearts, social meetings, brotherly fellowship, as the daily food of piety; and the broadest science, brought into the Church instead of being left in the college, teaching us to see God in the majestic movements of the stars, in the delicate anatomy of the flower, in the molecular motions and forces of chemical atoms, in the long processes of geology, — by such a combination we should have the highest piety of all.

But how can this come? My own profound conviction is that it can only come through the piety taught us and given to us by Jesus Christ. Its essence is the life of God in the soul, personally communicated through Jesus, the providential Mediator, and redeeming us by its power from all evil. It finds God within us, as well as around us.

The peculiarity of this piety is that it is childlike. "No man cometh to the Father but by me," said Jesus. The world never comes to see God as a father except through Christ. It had seen him as a power, as an order, as a sovereign ruler and judge; but it had not seen him as a father. With Jesus there entered into human life that sweet conception of an infinite parental love, of a Divine father and mother, both in one. Therefore he said, "Except ye be converted [or changed], and become as little children, ye cannot see the kingdom of God."

It is the childlike piety which unites in itself all the rest. The child is not in the least afraid of its parents, if they are what they ought to be; but it looks up to them with reverence, and is afraid of offending them. That is all the fear there is in it. The child does not come to its parents in a formal way, or make set speeches to them, but will bring them a bunch of flowers on their birthdays, and will have method in its love, if not form. The child does not gush into feeling or get wild with excitement about its love to its mother, but neither is it cold, stiff, or hard. It is natural and spontaneous. If it feels like laughing, it laughs; if like weeping, it weeps.

If we become thus like little children in the presence of the Eternal Father, we shall fulfil all other pieties in that of Jesus.

Let us trust God as a child trusts its parents. Then we shall have essential faith. A child trusts every one, at first and naturally, for it is taught to do so by the love which surrounds infancy. Little children are usually safe everywhere, for all persons take care of them. The room where a new-born infant sleeps is the sacred chamber, the sanctuary in the house. Every one who enters steps softly, as on holy ground. All persons stand around the cradle admiringly and wonderingly, as if there had never been a child before in the world. The happy mother clasps it to her heart in an ecstasy of delight. Every child is like the infant Jesus; though born in a manger, it has a star of hope hanging over its birthplace. Angels of love chant its welcome. Simple shepherds (or at least others as simple as shepherds) come to look at it and admire it, and wise men from the east, west, north, and south make pilgrimages to its crib. Now a child, fed on the milk of love from the beginning, naturally begins by faith. It trusts all the world, and its trust usually makes all persons its protectors. Among the pictures I saw recently in an

artists' exhibition, the one which took my fancy the most was one by Eastman Johnson, of a little child who had just come out of the cold, warming its hands before a stove. Why there should be anything so very interesting in that it is difficult to say. I suppose it was because it was a real child. What interests us in the child is its childhood, its trusting nature, its inexperience, its wonderful introduction into the novelties of existence, its happy confidence in the things of heaven and earth.

Now, we are all little children in this sense. The patriarch Methuseleh, who lived nearly one thousand years, and was then probably drowned in the flood, was an infant in the sight of the angels and archangels, who have lived many millions of years, and have seen the history of the whole solar system since it was developed out of a nebula. No doubt they stand around and look at us as we stand and look at the little child warming his hands at the stove, or opening his large eyes of wonder in his cradle.

We are to be like little children by trusting in God, in his angels, in the order of the universe, with the simple confidence of children. This is the root of Christian piety, — to look up to goodness,

not down to evil. Out of this root grow hope, courage, joy in life, love of truth, the sweet serenity of being, which makes us little children all our days, not slaves to fear, anxiety, or the world.

Wordsworth says, —

> . . . . "The child is father to the man;
> And I could wish my days to be
> Bound each to each by natural piety."

Natural piety, not artificial piety. It is a piety which grows up naturally out of a childlike faith into a manly hope and an angelic love. It is a piety which sees God, not merely at church on Sundays, but every day; which sees him in nature, life, work, play, joy, and sorrow. It is a piety which sees Jesus, not merely as a past Saviour, who lived once in Palestine and worked miracles, but as a present friend, unseen with the outward eye, but near to every soul which loves him. This natural piety loves man because it loves God, and loves God because it loves man; "for he who loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"

Now, the old law made it a *duty* to love God and man. Jesus said that the first of all the Mosaic Commandments was to love God with all one's heart, soul, and strength, and the second was to

love one's neighbor as one's self. But who can love as a duty? Can we love any one because we *ought* to love him, if he does not appear to us lovely? It is a great mistake to suppose that piety can be taught by preaching sermons about piety, by showing its excellence, its reasonableness, and the like. We can only love God when he seems lovely to us; we can only love man when man seems lovely. Jesus makes us love God by making God lovely. He makes him lovely to us because he was so to himself. To Jesus, God was the perfect friend, the friend of all his children, who loved his enemies, who sent his sunshine and showers on the evil and unthankful no less than on the obedient and pure. He was the being who saw the sinner a great way off, and had more joy over one sinner who repented than over ninety and nine who did not need repentance. Therefore, wherever Jesus went he carried sunshine and brought down heaven to earth. The divine love of a fatherly God looked out of his eyes and trembled in the tender accents of his voice. From his touch went forth healing, and forgiveness of sin came easily from his lips. A sweet peace breathed around him; it was a perpetual Sabbath wherever he came, in which men could rest their souls for-

ever and forever. Everything became lovely as he looked at it. God was a being of divine loveliness, not a stern king or judge, as the Jews too often regarded him. He was not a mere law of nature or order of the universe, as science frequently regards him. But God in Christ is a loving order, a fatherly law, a personal friend, yet of unknown depth and height. He is serenely majestic as the central power in the universe, holding all worlds in the hollow of his hand. Yet he is inwardly present to the heart of his humblest child, whenever, in sincere prayer and penitence, his child opens his heart to him.

When we look up adoringly and trustingly to such a God as this, we are able also to look down lovingly to whatever seems low, unworthy, and poor in this world. Those who love man kindly, learn to love God. Those who love God truly, are able also to love man, his creature and his child. If God can love men, such as we are, with all the faults and sins of which we are too conscious, we can love others who also are weak and sinful. If he has faith in us, we can have faith in them. If he can hope for us, we can also hope for them. If he forgives us, we also can forgive each other. Thus out of the childlike love for God, which Jesus teaches, spring

naturally all human charities and philanthropies. Thus "the child is father to the man." Thus all the pieties are united at last in one. The piety which is reverence and awe, the piety which is emotion and sympathy, the piety which is worship and sacrament, the piety which contemplates in science the God of nature, — all are fulfilled and harmonized in the faith of Jesus Christ. He brings us to his Father, "in whom we live, and move, and have our being; who is above all, and through all, and in us all," our strength and song, and our hope of salvation.

XIII.

JESUS A MEDIATOR.

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THE interest concerning the history and character of Jesus the Christ was never greater than now. Witness the popularity of the studies in relation to his life, — of the works by Strauss, Renan, Furness, "Ecce Homo," "Ecce Deus," and the like.

The life of Jesus will grow more interesting as it is studied more as a manifestation of human nature; that is, as a revelation of man no less than of God.

It will be found, perhaps, that the wonderful works, knowledge, character of Jesus are not unnatural, but natural; that they are not exceptional, but prophetic. What he was, all men may perhaps become, and one day shall become. He, perhaps, is the type of humanity, the example of its fully unfolded condition.

Whether this be so or not, it is certain that Jesus came to help others to become what he was. So far from regarding him as exceptional, the Gospels and Epistles apparently teach that everything Jesus was we are to be. Those who commune with him by

faith shall gradually be changed into the same image, and grow up into the stature of Jesus Christ.

If we will leave aside for a little while the never-ending questions concerning the nature, person, deity, and divinity of Jesus, and study, instead, his humanity, it may lead the Church to a common ground of faith.

Whether Jesus was or was not God has always been a question. But no one has ever questioned that he was a man. On that point the Scripture is too plain to be doubted. If, then, he was a man, let us see what sort of a man he was. This course of thought may lead us up till we shall, perhaps, discover in what sense he was Divine. Let us begin with what we know best, and go on to that which we are not so well acquainted with.

It would seem from the New Testament that Jesus had no incommunicable powers or qualities. What he had was his to communicate, not to keep. For example: —

Jesus had the power of working miracles. But this power he declares to be one which his disciples shall also possess: "Greater works than these shall ye do, because I go to my Father."

Jesus was one with God. But he says of his disciples, "That they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me."

Jesus had power on earth to forgive sins. But he says to his disciples, "Whosesoever sins ye remit, they are remitted to them."

Jesus was a perfect example of human goodness. But he says to his disciples, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect."

Jesus knew all things. But it is said of his disciples, "Ye have an unction from the Holy Ghost, and know all things."

Jesus was sinless. But the Apostle says, "He who is born of God cannot commit sin."

Jesus is to be judge of the earth. But Paul says that "the saints shall judge the world and men and angels."

In Jesus dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. The Apostle prays for the Ephesians that they "may be filled with all the fulness of God."

Jesus had glory with the Father before the foundation of the world. But he says of his disciples, "The glory thou gavest me I have given them."

God sent Jesus to be Saviour and Redeemer of the world. But he says to his disciples, "As my Father has sent me, even so send I you."

Such passages as these show that, according to the New Testament, Jesus came to be a medium to transmit to his fellow-men whatever he himself

received from God. All power was given to him in heaven and earth for the purposes of his mission and work. God gave him power over all flesh to give eternal life to as many as were given to him. He recognized always and everywhere his entire dependence on God for all he had. It was all given to him. The Son could do nothing of himself; and what he received, he received in order to give. He made of himself a pure channel through which God's life and truth might flow.

This is what we mean by calling Jesus a mediator. His work was to bring man to God and to make them one. This was his atoning work,—making God and man one. To atone is to make at-one, to reconcile. By making man at one with God he makes all other atonements possible. Earth and heaven, nature and grace, piety and morality, reason and revelation, science and faith; these and all other antagonisms can be reconciled when the most radical antagonism is atoned.

Now there are three views concerning mediators and mediation.

The first is that of Theodore Parker and his school, who say that we need no mediators between us and God; that we can all have immediate access to God at all times and under all cir-

cumstances. To this view I oppose the fact that multitudes are so low down and far off that they have not any faith or any conception of the true God, and *must* be helped up by some teaching and influence; and by the other fact that the universe is full of mediators and mediation, — that mediation is a universal law.

The second view is that of those who can see God *only* in Christ; who never dare to go to God without this mediation. They assume that God out of Christ is only vengeance, and that, unless they put the word "Christ" at the end of every prayer, God will not hear them; that unless they say that they expect to be saved by the merits of Christ they will not be saved. To this view I object that it destroys the very purpose of mediation; that Christ ceases to be a mediator when he does not bring us to God; that the universal law of mediation is that the mediator comes not to separate two parties, but to unite them. Whenever the mediator does his work effectually, he then disappears and ceases to be seen at all. It is this false view of mediation which has made it odious, because it makes the Christ come between God and the creature not to unite, but to separate.

I can well understand the nature of the objection

to this sort of mediation. This kind of mediator I should also oppose. When we think of the Christ as arbitrarily appointed to stand between us and God, we make his work a mere form; a kind of religious etiquette. Just as earthly princes have a ceremonial of reception, and all who wish to see them must be introduced by the proper officers, according to a certain formality, so many suppose it to be intended by Scripture to make of Jesus this formal mediator. We may come to God ever so sincerely, in love and penitence, but he does not hear us unless we have this ticket in our hand. Naturally this notion is carried further, and men say that Christ has, in like manner, appointed a certain church, with a certain order of ministers, ritual, ceremony, all in the technical descent, and unless we have this church's ticket in our hand we cannot come to Christ. Over and over again Jesus has denied this view. "The true worshipper must worship the Father in spirit and in truth." "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." The publican who said "God be merciful to me a sinner" went down to his house justified. Jesus told his disciples not to forbid those from casting out devils who followed not them, who did not belong to his outward church. He described

how in the last day the heathen who had never heard of him should yet be accepted as his true disciples, and belong to his kingdom.

A part of our knowledge is immediate, a part is mediate. I know my own existence and the existence of the outer world immediately. I am immediately conscious of my own freedom, of right and wrong, of duty, of the infinite and the finite. But I have no immediate knowledge of St. Petersburg, of the Pope, of the Zendavesta, of the Book of Genesis, of the future life, of the Battle of Bunker's Hill, of Julius Cæsar, or the satellites of Jupiter. I know St. Petersburg through the mediation of travellers who have been there; I know the Pope by means of those who have seen him; I know the Zendavesta and Book of Genesis by the mediation of translations; I know Julius Cæsar and the Battle of Bunker's Hill through the mediation of history; I know Jupiter's satellites through the mediation of my telescope.

The law of mediation is that the mediator is for the sake of the immediate. Mediation is means, and the means are for the sake of the end. If we stop in the means, we have not reached the end.

When we are away from God we need a mediator, not when we are with him. When I feel

the presence of God I do not need Christ, as a mediator. When I feel God's peace in my soul, his love in my heart, his truth in my conscience, I do not need to find Christ to lead me to God. I am with God already.

But when I am away from God; when the heavens look dark, and my conscience is clouded with the sense of sin; when the light within me is darkness; when I am led astray by appetite, by passion, by selfish will, — then I need Jesus to bring me back to God. Then I need to turn to him; to think of what he has said and done and borne; to think of his gracious promises, of his love for sinners. All this brings me to God.

One school of thought, however, rejects the whole notion of any mediate religion. They think all religion immediate, a direct communication from God to the human soul. They say we can go directly to God, as Jesus did. They say we do not wish for any mediator to stand between us and God.

But suppose a person should say, "I do not choose to have any mediator between me and my friend. I wish to speak to him directly, face to face. I do not wish for a go-between to come between me and my father, between me and my

wife or child." You would probably reply, "This is well, provided you are with your friend, your father, your wife, or your child. But if you are absent from them; if they are in Europe and you in America, they in New Orleans and you in Boston, — you may, perhaps, be very thankful for the mediation of the post-office, which shall carry letters, of a friend who shall bring a message, of a steamer or railroad-train which shall convey them to you or you to them."

It would seem, therefore, that, though a mediator is not necessary when we are with our friend, mediation may be necessary when we are absent from him. So if we are with God we do not need a mediator; but, being often away from God, we may.

But to this it may be replied again, "In the instances given there were material obstacles to meeting. But there is neither space nor time between us and God. God is close to our heart always, and we have only to turn to him at any moment to find him. So your illustrations do not apply to the case."

Take, then, a different illustration. You have a friend whom you love. But you are estranged from your friend; a misunderstanding has come up be-

tween you. Some third person now comes between and mediates; some wise and good person, capable of understanding you both and explaining each to the other. He then is a mediator to reconcile you and make you at one. In this sense Christ mediates between the soul and God.

God is always near to us, always waiting to be gracious. But we do not know it, or do not believe it. We think him far off, far away. We think he is angry with us because of our sin, and that he will not forgive. Jesus, in his infinite tenderness toward the sinner, so mediates a divine tenderness that we are now able to believe in God's love, and can come to him.

The law of mediation is one of the most universal laws. It is the experience of all our life. It is the condition of all progress. Life flows down from God through countless mediators. Thought spreads from the highest intellect to the lowest through mediation.

I enter a primary school. I find a young girl there, who comes every day to sit among these little things and teach them. She is refined, intelligent, conscientious. The tones of her voice are sweet as she talks with the children. They come from rude homes. There they hear oaths, and see

faces red with anger, and listen to voices harsh with bad passions. Here they listen to gentle words, and wonderingly they perceive that there is such a thing as kindness in the world. She opens these closed intellects; she wakes these torpid minds; she warms these little hearts. She teaches them of the world in which they live, of its great continents, its rolling oceans, its vast plains, its majestic mountains, its forests, its zones of ice and snows, of burning heat. She tells them of the tribes of animals which roam the wilds, of strange fishes which swim the seas, of varieties of stones, trees, flowers, insects, birds. She unfolds to them the wonders of creation. Then she takes their little hands and leads them back through the past centuries of history. She shows them how this country was planted, and how it has grown to be what it is. She tells them of Greece and Rome and England. She opens their minds and hearts, and is the mediator between them and the universe. It all flows through her mind to theirs; and the children are lifted to a new realm of thought and love while they look and listen to her.

When evening comes, this teacher, tired with her task, goes, perhaps, for refreshment, to hear a lecture,

or to listen to some person who reads Shakespeare. It is some great actor or reader, who is able to interpret the thought of this wonderful master of human nature. He mediates Shakespeare to us. As we listen, we are lifted into communion with this master. We had the book at home, we might have read it to ourselves; but we needed a mediator between our mind and the mind of Shakespeare. When we have read it alone, much seemed unnatural, foreign, strange. But now, as we listen to that impassioned voice, we enter into the very mind of Othello, of Hamlet, of Lear. We feel deep down into our hearts the thrills of sympathy. For the hour we are Hamlet, we are Lear. Our sphere of human experience is enlarged. We are taken out of the narrow interests and petty cares of our daily life, and lifted, by this power of mediation, into intimate communion with the foreign and the far.

So, too, music opens by its mediation a new world. As, when one rises in a balloon, the earth seems fading away from under him, and all its hard outlines change into a picture; so, as we listen to great music, life grows transfigured, the weariness of years falls from us, and we renew our youth, our hope, our love.

What a mediator is language! Words, those airy nothings, those facile, fleeting sounds, are the me-

diums through which pass from man to man all the knowledge, all the life, of humanity. Without words, no civilization were possible; we should still be savages, no better than brutes. When language comes, when the thought can be taken out of the mind and put into this box which we call a word, and so transmitted to another mind, then civilization begins. All knowledges, all purposes, are mediated through words.

Books are mediators between the past and the present, the great and the small, the distant and the near. These are the treasuries into which all the true riches of the world are garnered. I go and sit among my books, and I have the society of the wise and good of all times. I wish to know what Plato, Montaigne, or Bacon think of such a matter: they come to give me their best thoughts. Here stands an encyclopædia, there an atlas, here one of the great poets. I ask for anything which I want, and it comes. If I wish to know about Arabia, or Egypt, or Central Tartary, I find a book of travels which tells me all I seek. In my book I ascend the Nile, I go through Abyssinia, I see the wild beasts and strange tribes of men, without fatigue, expense, or danger. I penetrate the torrid zone, and dread no fever. I travel with Livingstone through Southern

Africa, with Huc I go into the Buddhist convents, or with Kane I pass a winter amid the lonely beauty of Greenland's icy mountains. So do books mediate to me all human experience. So is the printing-press the mediator of all thought.

Nature is a great mediator between God and the soul. It weaves for God the garment by which we see him. It shows us intelligence everywhere, all things fitted for each other, nothing fair or good alone. Look at the sun fitted to the earth, the earth adapted to the sun. In the spring millions of seeds touched by his rays awake to warmth and life. In the summer millions of insects, birds, beasts, are fed by these seeds, which have become plants. I see this great sun giving light by which all creatures may see, and all creatures down to the lowest orders are provided with eyes adapted to the sunlight. I see this sun painting nature with beauty of color, of light and shade, contrast and harmony, and so becoming God's great artist. As the earth spins on its soft axle from night into day, the dawn calls on all creatures to awaken, and the sun is their lamp, by which they can come out and work, each according to his own task. The mighty sun also pumps up water out of the ocean by millions of rays, every ray a little pump to bring up the transparent vapor; and

then the sun, heating one zone of earth more than another, creates great currents of air, by which the vapor is carried over continents till it meets the cold mountain-tops, and falls in snow and rain, and rushes down to the sea again in a thousand rivers. Thus the sun is a great mediator between God and his creatures; he warms them, he lightens them, he feeds them, he supplies them with air and water. No wonder that men, seeing all this glory, wonder, and power, worshipped the creature instead of the Creator. No wonder that the Persians saw in him the chief type of God, and that they called him Mithras, or "The Mediator."

But of all mediators between God and man, man himself is the best. The mother bending over her infant, watching, guarding, guiding it, is the first type to the child of Divine Providence. The love raining on it in showers of sweetness from her lips and eyes is the first influence of Divine love to its young heart. So is God's wisdom mediated to us through the sages, the elders, the wise men and women who have seen life, and whose words come freighted with solid experience. So is God's generosity mediated to us through human generosity; through those who have done good to us, hoping for nothing again; who have given time, thought, sympathy, to our needs,

because it was their noble nature to do so; whom we cannot praise and dare not thank, because it would seem like trying to repay what can never be repaid. These are our angels, our saints, to whom we owe the knowledge of genuine, solid goodness. But the best thing they do for us is to enable us, by believing in the reality of truth and love, to believe in God, — sole true, sole good.

Every nation has its prophets, its lawgivers, its Divine messengers. Life would be poor enough if these were taken away. When we lose our faith in prophets, martyrs, and saints, we had better die. There is only one soul-destroying infidelity; it is to doubt the reality of goodness. The low cunning, calling itself wisdom, which thinks itself knowing because it believes all men knaves, each man with his price; which considers self-love the only wire by which these human puppets are pulled, — this is the only atheism there is. Deny conscience, deny generosity, deny purity of heart, and you quench the eye in man's soul by which he sees God. But when we believe in good men and women, in holy men and women, in true men and women, then we are beginning to believe in God. For these are the mediators of the most divine element in Deity; that is, of his goodness. Nature mediates power,

providence, wisdom, universal beauty; but good men alone can mediate that infinite fatherly and motherly love, that righteousness like the great fountain without stain, that absolute beauty of holiness which is the very God in God.

If, then, nature, providence, good men and women, all prophets of truth, all saints of love, are mediators between God and man, why does Paul say, "There is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus"? In answer to this we may say that Paul emphasizes the humanity of Christ here. It is the man Christ Jesus; it is his perfect humanity which enables him to be a perfect mediator. It is because he sums up in himself all our human affections, fulfils all our human goodness, enters into our human wants and sins with perfect sympathy, that he stands between us and God to bring God near. It is "the man Christ Jesus," not the God Jesus, who is the mediator between God and man.

The mission of Jesus was to be the mediator of the religion of humanity. He was to show that religion was made for man, not man for religion; that the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath; that the Bible was made for man, not man for the Bible; that the Church was made for

man, not man for the Church. He manifests the synthesis of piety and humanity; shows that whoever truly loves God must love man, and whoever truly loves man must love God. He taught that man is greater than the Temple, greater than all forms and ceremonies, and that the development and education of the human soul is the object of true religion. He came to be the mediator of this idea, of the humanity of religion.

In doing this, Jesus fulfilled the ideas of all other great prophets and all other great religions. All, as the Apostle declares, are summed up in love to God and man. This divine-human love is not only the fulfilling of the Jewish law but of all other laws. Thus Brahmanism teaches a Divine love, but not a human love. Buddhism teaches a human love, but not a Divine one. Some teach the divinity of spirit, but not that of nature; others, like Egypt, teach the divinity of nature, but not of spirit. Jesus, by his gospel, not only makes God and man one, but also unites in one central truth all other partial truths. The other religions disappear only because they are fulfilled. When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part is *always* done away. Christianity has fulfilled the religions of Greece, Scandinavia, Egypt, Rome, Per-

sia, and they have disappeared their work being done. The vast religions of Central and Eastern Asia have not yet been reached, but in the fulness of time they also will be fulfilled in the gospel. The great Semitic reaction which we call Mohammedanism resulted from erroneous doctrines in the Christian Church concerning the Trinity, which seemed to cloud the central truth that the Lord our God is one Lord. Islam is a protest in behalf of monotheism, and was made inevitable by the false direction taken by the Church in its discussions of the Trinity and Incarnation. When Unitarian theology shall have leavened Christianity sufficiently, and Christ is accepted as a Divine man, and not as a human God, Islam, with all its vast body of converted monotheists, will be reunited to Christendom.

XIV.

THE EXPECTATIONS AND DISAPPOINTMENTS OF JESUS.

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THERE is nothing more interesting than to look into the mind of a great man, a man of genius, and see what he thought of himself and of his works. That is why we love biography, especially autobiography. We wish to become intimate with the person whose genius has enchanted us, or whose soul has gone over the world; to know what he thought and did in private, and whether he felt like ourselves in his home and by his fireside. We wish to trace the springs of his greatness; to see the motive which roused him, the end he pursued. We never tire of such biographies as those of Johnson, Walter Scott, John Wesley, Benjamin Franklin, Schiller, Columbus, Washington, Charles Lamb, Charlotte Bronté, Frederick Robertson or such autobiographies as the Confessions of St. Augustine, the memoirs of Benvenuto Cellini, Horace Walpole, Alfieri, Silvio Pellico, Goethe, Cowper.

Perhaps one reason why we love poetry is that

poetry is almost always autobiography. The poet stands always in the confessional, and unlocks his heart with that golden key. He confides the inmost secret of his soul, the deepest aim of his life, his most sacred experience, in that dim religious light, under the rose of song. Cowper's biography does not tell us so much of him as do his hymns; and if Shakespeare had written his own life, I doubt if we should have learned more of his inmost being than we can now learn from his sonnets. When we read Mrs. Browning's poetry, or that of Whittier, we come nearer to their heart than if we were living in their house; for we might live in their house and not live in their soul.

But who shall read to us the interior life of the greatest of all human souls? Who shall show us what were *his* hidden experiences, his struggles with himself, the gradual steps by which he came to the conviction that he was meant, in God's providence, to be the king of the world and the man of men; that he was sent to lift men out of servitude into freedom by making them children of God, to raise humanity out of sin into holiness, to cure the woes and diseases of the human heart, to bring peace instead of war into the world?

I say by gradual steps. It must have come to

him gradually, for that is the human way. He "increased in knowledge and wisdom," says the faithful text, "and in favor with God and man." As long as he was considered a God, no growth was deemed possible, and no one asked this question. Now we must ask it, — but can it be answered?

Not a word, not a line, have we (except those few words which tell us that he grew in wisdom and knowledge) from all the thirty years of his youth. Then God was educating him; but of that education nothing has been told us. O, if only in some monastery on Mount Athos, or some cave in India, a real gospel of the youth of Jesus might be found! But no; he comes forward in all the maturity of his powers and aims. He is a priest after the order of Melchizedek; there is no genealogy of his soul given to us; *that* is without father or mother, without beginning of days or end of years.

Why this is so it is easy to see. Who was there then who could have understood the inward experience of the soul of Jesus? No one near him was adequate to that. Possibly Paul might have done so, who understood him so well afterward; but none of those simple, honest fishermen of the lake could have comprehended anything of the struggles

and aspirations of Jesus. He was, and must be, intellectually and spiritually alone.

Only one symbolic story we have, by which, in a sort of parable, Jesus told his disciples something of his inward trials. In this history of the temptation he lets them have the condensed history of his greatest struggle with himself. He was conscious of his immense, immeasurable spiritual power. He knew that he could easily do what Mohammed afterward did,—that he could wield, mould, and band together the hearts of thousands till they should beat as one, and so create an irresistible moral force. He knew that neither the authority of the Jewish schools, the power of Pagan superstition, nor the eagles of Rome, could oppose him successfully, if he chose thus to unite, in one flame of fiery zeal, the hearts of his nation. He knew there was in himself this "mystery of commanding" mankind, and one of his temptations was to use it in order to establish the kingdom of heaven.

If the Arab tribes, who for two thousand years had played no part in human history, were so united by the faith of Mohammed as to conquer the world, how easy had it been for Jesus to thus unite the whole Semitic race on a far higher plane of conviction, and in a far deeper life. He might

have made of them an irresistible, unconquerable power. His miraculous or singular physical gifts, joined with his intellectual insight and spiritual force, would easily have awakened such a flame of enthusiasm as would have made the Jewish people a power nothing could oppose. They expected it, they longed for it, they were all ready for it; they wanted to take him by force and make him their king. The latent strength of that Semitic race afterward showed itself in their wars with the Romans. When united by a religious conviction, they have always been terrible. Even without that conviction the Carthaginians, under Hannibal, nearly destroyed the Roman power. With it, under Mohammed, the Arabs overran the world. There was another temptation. If he did not do this, he might do something else. He might abstain wholly from active life, renounce all ambition of power, and become the great thinker and seer of mankind. He would then become, not the king of the human race, but its prophet. Instead of a few conversations, exhortations, parables, addressed to the ignorant common people, he might be the one great teacher of truth and beauty for all mankind. Retiring into some monastic seclusion, and devoting his life to thought and writing, he might speak to mankind

as neither Plato, Aristotle, nor Homer among the Greeks, nor David and Isaiah among his own people, had done. What a divine work would have come from the intellect of Jesus, if he had devoted long years to its creation. Then, indeed, he would have stood on the pinnacle of the Temple, borne up by the angels of truth and love.

But Jesus saw that it was not the voice of God, but the voice of Satan, which offered him thus all the kingdoms of the world; offered him the bread of love and reverence instead of the stones of slanderous, cruel, hard-hearted opposition; offered him a shining place in the temple of God instead of his obscure Galilean work. So he said "Get thee behind me, Satan!" and went forward to the task God had given him to do.

This is all we know from Jesus himself of the struggles and temptations which preceded his open ministry. We know nothing of the growth of his soul. He came forth at thirty years, composed, self-possessed, without any hesitation in his thought. He was not an inquirer or thinker, like Socrates. He spoke with authority, sure of himself. He was humble and lowly of heart, for he sought no praise, nor any place but that of service. Yet he had that entire conviction of his own power that caused him

to say, "I am the way, the truth, and the life"; "See me, and you see God as a father"; "I am one with God"; "Come to me and have rest"; "All power is given to me in heaven and earth." What majestic claims combined with what lowly service!

Jesus came forth from his obscurity unheralded, as in 1492 the star seen by Tycho appeared suddenly in the sky. As that star appeared in its place in the heavens bright as the star Sirius, and in a few weeks became brighter than the planet Venus, so Jesus came forth in the full glory of his heavenly insight, taught for a year or two, and then came to an end. But, unlike that star, his glory has increased and has filled the world, and will continue to grow until every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The purpose which he had in coming forward was to become the Jewish Messiah in the highest spiritual sense. It was to make the whole nation kings and priests to God; missionaries of the human race to bring mankind to the worship of one God, even the Father. In this high sense he was to be their king, prophet, and priest. He called on them to follow him, that they might become the true leaders of the world. But to do this they must begin by

renouncing all secular ambition, all worldly power. So he commenced his Sermon on the Mount by telling them that if they would have the kingdom of heaven they must be poor in spirit, meek, and willing to be persecuted for righteousness' sake. It was the expectation of Jesus to lead his nation into this heavenly kingdom; to become its prophet and inspiration; to unite them, not for conquest, but for the service of mankind. He hoped to be able to overcome the bigotry of the priests and sluggishness of the people by the power of his own convictions. He thought the kingdom of heaven was at hand, and sent forth his disciples to say so. When, at the very beginning of his mission, he healed the Roman centurion's servant, and saw his faith, he perceived in it a sign of the speedy conversion of the Gentiles to the worship of one God. "Many," said he, "shall come from the east and the west and sit down with Abraham in the kingdom of God."

But this great hope was no blind enthusiasm. He knew well all the obstacles in his path. The Jewish nation was not what it ought to be. The salt had lost its savor. If the people of Tyre and Sidon, of Sodom and Gomorrah, had heard what the people of Cana and Capernaum heard, they would have

repented. His own nation had so little interest in his teaching, so little sense of his meaning, that he was obliged to change his method of communication and tell them stories, hiding his moral in the fable. It deeply wounded him to hear that the Pharisees had explained his miracles by the power of Satan. He referred to it afterward in a way that showed how much he felt it. He said, "If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more they of his household." He soon saw that the cross lay at the end of his course. He told his disciples that they must be prepared to take up their cross, too, and to follow him. He was not afraid of this cruel death; what he feared, and all that he feared, was rejection and the defeat of his cause. He knew that he could be a better Messiah by dying than by living. "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." * Possibly he founded the body of the twelve Apostles that he might educate them to take his place, and be the head of the nation when he should die, leading the twelve tribes, one for each tribe. They were ignorant, to be sure; but then he had faith in the Divine Spirit to believe that it would lead them into all truth, and teach them, at last, their whole lesson.

* "Except a grain of wheat die, it abideth alone."

The expectation of Jesus, therefore, was of his own speedy coming as king. His great disappointment was not that he should himself be put to death, but that his cause should not triumph, and that his nation should not accept him as their Messiah. "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and your children." It was a cruel disappointment to his patriotic heart to think that his nation should cast away its great opportunity; that Jerusalem, the sacred city, should not know the hour of its visitation; that the Jewish nation, a city set on a hill, a light meant to be kept in its candlestick to enlighten all in the house, should vacate its high privilege. He mourned for them; he mourned for mankind too. He saw what a break would intervene in the progress of humanity, how his religion would be corrupted by paganism because the educated mind of Judæa renounced the charge of it. If the Jewish people had accepted the religion of Jesus as the true fulfilment of their law, and made of it a universal religion, their monotheistic spirit would have saved it from such doctrines as the Trinity and Deity of Christ, and such practices as the worship of saints and of the Virgin, monasticism and celibacy. The religion of Moses, which had been spiritualized into that of the Prophets, would have been universal-

ized into that of Jesus. The Jewish nation seemed to have been expressly created, in their ethnic peculiarities, for this work; and what a vast disappointment it was to Jesus that they refused to do it! He could hardly give up this hope, even at the last hour; and his agony in the Garden was, if one dare penetrate that sacred sorrow, in view of *this* bitterest cup.

The expectation of Jesus that his truth should finally prevail was not disappointed. He was only disappointed as to the time and manner. He knew that he was sent to be the king of the world, and that his coming as king was sure. He knew he should come in the clouds of heaven; that is, in the mystery and majesty of spiritual convictions. Heaven is the place of souls, and when Christ comes in the souls of men he comes in the heavens. He knew he should send forth his angels, and gather his elect from all the corners of the earth. And so he has, and is to do it yet more abundantly. He perceived that the temple worship, with its ritual and priesthood, was to come to an end, for they were no essential part of the true religion of Moses. He understood that this would not come without mighty struggle and great suffering, since all the births of time are painful. He knew also that his coming was to begin soon, before that generation had passed

away. But the day and hour he did not know; *that* no finite being could know certainly. That events shall certainly come depends on the providence of God; *when* they shall come depends also on the free-will of man, who can postpone indefinitely, but not forever, the purposes of God and their accomplishment.

The deep sorrow in the heart of Jesus came from the sight of that bigotry, selfishness, unbelief, by which his people shut their eyes, and closed their ears, and hardened their hearts, so as not to be converted and healed. This was his perpetual disappointment, his real cross. The cross of Calvary had no terror for him, except as the sign of this national rejection and its consequences. The sting of his death was the sin of his nation which caused it.

In reading the biographies of the greatest and most successful men, we almost always find in their lives this same element of disappointment. They only fulfil half their hope.

> "Their noblest deed had once another,
> Of high Imagination born, —
> A loftier and an elder brother,
> From dear existence torn."

How triumphant the apparent success of such lives as those of Washington, Columbus, Walter Scott!

But read their biographies, and learn how the advent of all great things is like the coming of the Son of man. They always come in wars and struggles, persecution and opposition, false prophets, false brethren, darkened sunlight and falling stars. Columbus was baffled and beset all his life with the most cruel ingratitude, bitter hatred, and cold neglect. Washington's greatest merit and glory is, that he did not resign his place, as most men would have done, when he was perpetually suspected, neglected, opposed, and his army left unprovided with the absolute necessities of life. Walter Scott died dragged to the earth by debts not his own, and never realizing one perfectly peaceful hour, free from all anxiety. Charles Lamb, so bright and so cheerful in his books; what a terrible tragedy was his inner life! Charlotte Bronté, whose genius won ultimately such great success; what a sad martyrdom were all her years! It seems as if it might be said of *all* God's prophets: "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and embraced them, confessing themselves strangers and pilgrims on the earth." They learn in suffering what they teach in song.

All great souls must live a life of disappointment, for their ideal must always be higher than any possi-

ble attainment. Therefore Jesus, as the greatest of all souls, was also one whose disappointment was the greatest. His ideal was the conversion of his nation to a broad spiritual religion, the essence of which should be love to God and to man; and his hope was that this nation, thus emancipated from its past, thus deepened and broadened, should become indeed the city on the hill, its light shining through all the earth, its Jehovah become the universal Father, worshipped neither at Jerusalem nor at Gerizim, but only in spirit and in truth.

His hope was disappointed. But he who can say "Not my will, but thine, be done," is never wholly disappointed. No matter how he may, at first, seem to himself to fail, at last he will be able to say to his Father, "I have finished the work thou gavest me to do." And all great souls, like Jesus, have beneath their outward sense of anxiety and failure the inward abiding conviction of ultimate and permanent success.

In Gerome's picture of the Crucifixion, lately exhibited in New York, the crosses do not appear. Only their black shadows come in, from behind, upon the foreground. We see before us the city of Jerusalem in all its majesty. It seems a mile or two away. It is filled with those who know nothing of

this day of their visitation, — those who are engaged in all the rush of a great city's life, entirely ignorant that the most important event in the history of man is taking place close by. They know nothing of this event, one of whose consequences will be the destruction and desolation, with unspeakable horrors, of their own great metropolis. So man walks blindly on, his eyes holden, not seeing the day of his visitation, letting his opportunities go ; and finding, when it is too late, that the Christ of God has been near him, calling to him day after day to come to him and have rest.

Such were the expectations and disappointments of Jesus. We all have ours. Our hopes are deceived, our loved ones are taken too soon away, our morning sun, "flattering the mountain-top with sovereign eye," is covered with dark mists, and hidden from the forlorn world. Let us remember, then, that such disappointments are part of the education of the soul ; that the highest natures have the sharpest disappointments, and that those of Jesus were the most cruel of all. To wish to be spared these is to wish to live without any ideal, to be without any great hope, to lose the discipline and education of life ; for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.

The best successes of this life are not its outward

triumphs. Outward triumph may be, and often is, inward ruin. Happy those who, when their efforts are baffled, their love deceived, their most precious hopes blasted, are able to trust God, submit to his will, and believe that all is right which seems most wrong.

XV.

COMMON-SENSE VIEW OF SALVATION BY FAITH.

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I WISH to explain, if possible, the common-sense view of salvation by faith.

Many persons will say, I suppose, that the whole doctrine of salvation by faith is opposed to common-sense. But this is because they understand by faith some theological opinion, and because they understand by salvation a rescue out of a future hell into some future external heaven.

But faith is, in reality, just as dear, precious, and indispensable to common-sense as it is to religion. In all the matters of every-day life faith is just as necessary as sight. You cannot build a house, or go on a journey, or make a bargain, or cook a dinner, without faith. Without faith the whole business of life would come to an end. We walk by faith nearly all the time. Let me illustrate this.

Beginning on the lowest plane, we all believe in the stability of the outward world, and walk by that faith. We all go to bed at night, and fall

asleep, — which is just like dying, — believing that we shall wake in the morning, and that there will be a morning to wake in. We expect to find our house and furniture and family to-morrow just as they were to-day. We shall sit down to breakfast to-morrow believing that it will feed us and not poison us. We shall go to our business expecting to find people to deal with, and work to do, as we found them yesterday. We all repose, in perfect security, on this firm faith in the stability of the universe. We walk by it, live by it, are saved by it. When a man begins to doubt it, he begins to be insane. If a man distrusts his friends and thinks they want to hurt him, distrusts his food and thinks it will poison him, and so leaves the domain of universal faith, his friends say he is going crazy. Scepticism here is the same as insanity. It is mental death. Sensible and sane people live by faith in the permanence of the laws of nature. It is the evidence of things not seen. You trust that the things you have not seen will be like the things you have seen; that to-morrow will be like to-day, as to-day is like yesterday.

The first fact, therefore, which we notice is, that all our life reposes on faith in the constancy of law, and upon faith in each other. We cannot

take a step or do the commonest thing without this faith.

The next fact which we observe is that faith is the great means of education; it leads to knowledge. Little children come into life ready to believe all that is told them, and so they learn fast. They may be told some falsehoods, but ninety-nine one-hundredths of what they are told is true. They are saved by faith from their ignorance. They are led by faith to sight. Faith in parents, teachers, superiors, is the great conduit by which knowledge is poured into their souls.

But if, now, we analyze faith to see what it is, we shall find that it is, first, faith in persons. This is the faith of the child. Next, it is faith in ideas, in laws, in principles. And, lastly, it is the union of both, faith in God, in whom law and love are one, — the Divine Being whose nature is truth, who is the sum of all the laws of the universe.

By this faith we live, by this faith we grow, by this faith we accomplish everything, by this faith we are saved. We cease to be animals as we arise out of sensation and sight into belief and trust in ideas.

All great men, all the souls who govern the world and lead on society, are great in proportion to their

strength of conviction. They act, not by what they see, but by their strong confidence in what they do not see. They obtain a good report by faith.

All great inventions and discoveries have come from faith.

In the year 1492 a little vessel was struggling with storms on the bosom of the Atlantic, gradually making its way westward. This great ocean, now spotted everywhere with sails and traversed by steamers, which has its streets and roads almost as distinct as those of a city, rolled then, as it had rolled since creation, without a trace of human existence on its vast surface. One man's faith has changed it all. One man, who believed enough in things not seen to go forth and make his way into the great mystery of the unknown West, created a new world. He believed in the invisible things of God and nature. He went out to a place which he should afterward receive as an inheritance. He sojourned in the land of promise as a stranger, looking for a building which had foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Columbus walked by faith in God just as much as Abraham did, and so faith added half a world to the domain of sight.

All the great discoveries of modern times were

once ideas in the minds of their inventors. The printing-press, which pours out its millions of sheets every day, which lays on our doorsteps every evening the news of the whole world, was once a matter of faith in the mind of a Faust. The steamboat, whose tremendous machinery moves with such power and such ease, which unites the continents, abolishes the oceans, and ransacks every river and bay and lake of Europe and America with its restless activity, was once a matter of faith in the mind of Fulton. The power-looms which roar from early morn to dewy eve by the streams of New England and in the valleys of Old England, which clothe the inhabitants of the world, were, a few years since, a matter of faith in the mind of Watt. The locomotives which traverse the plain, ascend the mountain, and rush across continents, drawing their immense burdens as easily as if they were a child's basket-wagon, were once a matter of faith in the mind of Stephenson. The photograph, which brings to us the exact forms of the Pyramids of Egypt and the ruins of Athens; which preserves the dear features of child and wife; which rescues from oblivion the tender gaze of love, the glow of thought, the expression of a generous purpose,— that also was, at first, a belief in the mind of Daguerre. All the inventions, luxuries, arts, all

the knowledge, power, wealth, of the world, is the creation of faith. Columbus, Watt, Fulton, Daguerre, Stephenson, all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them. They triumphed over obstacles, they bore ridicule and contempt willingly, because they counted God and nature faithful, who had promised them, in their strong conviction, that they should succeed in accomplishing what they designed. And so they saw at last a part of what they foresaw, and their faith led to sight.

All great moral reforms have begun in faith. Have we not seen in our own day the tremendous power of slavery, which had taken possession of the Union, overthrown by the faith of a few men in the principles of eternal justice? They believed, therefore they spoke; and by their speech they overthrew this terrible power. On one side was organization, law, prestige, a great political party, Presidents, Congress, the army and navy of the Union; on the other nothing but *faith*, — faith in justice, truth, God. And this invisible power conquered all the outward forces of the things seen and temporal.

Recently, in New York, theft and villany had

intrenched themselves so strongly that it seemed impossible to overthrow them. They had possession of the ballot-box, the courts, millions of money, and all the forms of law. But a single newspaper, having faith in the power of truth, assailed them; and now we see this great and impudent power prostrate before the mighty unseen force of conviction and truth. These men who ruled the metropolis are defeated, and their power broken. The people of New York may say, "We are saved by faith."

Of the great Semitic race, many families were distinguished in antiquity. Some of them built Babylon and Nineveh, and created the civilizations of the valleys of the Euphrates and Tigris. The Phœnicians became famous in arts, commerce, and maritime discovery. They sailed out of the Red Sea and went to India. They sailed out of the Mediterranean and discovered Great Britain. They circumnavigated Africa. The Carthaginians were the proud rivals of Rome, and the merchants of the Old World. They flowered out in Hannibal, the greatest captain of any age. But one family of the race remained obscure, unknown, hidden in the deserts of Arabia, during twenty centuries. They had no union, no civilization, no religion. But at last a man arose with faith in God, believing in one Supreme Spiritual Being. During thirteen

years he preached this faith in spite of opposition and scorn. At last he triumphed; and then this Arab people, inspired by their new conviction, suddenly flamed up into a power which astonished mankind. They overran and conquered Syria, Persia, Egypt, North Africa. They invaded Spain and took possession of it. They invaded the Byzantine Empire and took Constantinople. They developed a great civilization. Their scholars translated Plato and Aristotle. Their medical schools were the most renowned in the world. They discovered chemistry, taught astronomy, invented algebra. This sudden development was all born of faith, — of faith in one God. It was like the star which Tycho Brahe saw suddenly appearing. In a few years it was all gone, because it had substituted force for faith, the sword for conviction. As long as the Arabs believed, they went forward trusting to things unseen; as soon as they relied on things seen, they began to decay.

Protestantism, as a faith in ideas, had a similar mighty influence. In a few years it overran nearly all Europe. Not only Germany and England and Sweden, but France, Spain, Austria, Italy, were half converted to its doctrines. Then Luther and his friends became alarmed at the variety of opinions which sprang up, and they denied their own prin-

ciple of freedom. They set up an orthodox creed and an infallible Bible, and refused to commune with any who would not accept their dogmas. Then Protestantism was checked, and has never recovered from its reverses to this day. As long as it had faith in ideas, it triumphed; as soon as it began to deny its early faith, it fell.

All the strength and force of man comes from his faith in things unseen. He who believes is strong, he who doubts is weak. Strong convictions precede great actions. The man strongly possessed of an idea is the master of all who are uncertain and wavering. Clear, deep, living convictions rule the world.

Now, the highest of all ideas is that of God. It includes all other great truths in itself, as the ocean includes all its waves. He who believes in God has the fulness of faith in all unseen realities.

But the idea of God is greater in some minds than in others. Some of the prophets of the world have seen God as power, some as law, some as a perfect providence, some as the life of nature. Every such faith has helped to save the world from its ignorance, its coldness, its death. It has turned savages into men, it has purified life of its evils, it has awakened the head, moved the heart, strengthened the hand. And this is the real salvation for man, this inward life,

which saves him from the hell of ignorance and mental death, from the hell of selfishness and moral death, from the hell of passivity, inaction, sloth, which is the death of his will. Heaven here, in its essence, is hope and love; and all of an outward, visible heaven is only the fruit of this. The state of a man's soul makes heaven or hell; and the state of his soul depends on his having, or not having, strong convictions of unseen realities, great love for unseen beauty and truth; in short, faith in God, truth, duty, eternal facts and laws.

All prophets have awakened more or less of this faith, all of them have lifted man out of the life of sense into the life of ideas and convictions. But Jesus has done this in a vastly greater measure. What they have done partially, he has done universally. They have taught this or that particular race for a time; he teaches humanity for all time. His great faith in God as the union of perfect power, wisdom, and love can never be exceeded or outgrown. Ages come and go, and each age as it advances comes nearer to him. The highest life in the human soul is derived from that faith which Jesus has inspired in the world. If any one thinks that he can get a faith larger than that of Jesus, let him by all means try to do it, for why should

not that experiment be made? If any one thinks he can walk more surely without the guidance of Jesus, let him try; the result will probably be to bring him back to Christ, saying, as the Apostles said, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."

Once, when going with a party through the great Mammoth Cave of Kentucky, we grew tired of following our guide. The cave opened before us vast and grand, but it seemed a plain way; and so we thought we would go forward and find the way for ourselves. The guide stayed behind, and let us go on. But directly we came where side-passages opened out of the darkness, where vast pits yawned before us. Then we became confused and uncertain, and willingly consented to be led by experience and knowledge. We found we could walk by faith better than by sight. But it was an intelligent faith, for it was placed on a tried leader, long familiar with every intricacy and winding avenue of the mysterious, awful region; mile after mile we followed him, till at last we saw in the distance a beautiful light, seeming to be composed of all emeralds, rubies, and diamonds, and we found it to be sunshine and day seen through the entrance in the far distance.

So the world follows Jesus, walking by faith in him. It sometimes leaves *him* to try to go alone, but it always returns again. For faith in him is not faith in him, but faith in his experience, his insight, his inspiring power, his truth, and his love. Faith in him is faith in the God whom he sees, his Father and our Father, his God and our God. It is a faith which reconciles reason and religion, nature and grace, law and love. All the laws of the universe are but the manifestation of the Divine truth ; and all the progress, life, and joy of the universe are but the manifestation of the Divine love.

"He who believeth in me," says Jesus, "believeth *not in me*, but in him who hath sent me."

There are two systems of thought in relation to Christ. According to one of these systems, faith in Christ means believing a great deal about him personally. It is to believe that in some mysterious way he is God. It is to believe that by some mysterious transaction he has satisfied the justice of God by his death. It is to believe that if we profess faith in him, and openly declare that he is our Saviour, he will induce God to forgive us and to save us. The other system of thought always carries us through Christ to God, his Father and ours. When we believe in Christ, we do not believe in

Christ, but in him who sent him. He teaches us to see God near to us, helping us, blessing us, saving us. To believe in Christ, according to this system, is to believe in what Christ believes; to believe in purity of heart, in honesty of life, in humility, in hope, in magnanimity. Jesus does not care for our admiring him, or praising him, or confessing him. He wishes us to admire his truth, to confess his gospel, to walk in his way, whether we say anything of him or not. He says, "My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me."

What is it to believe in the Divinity of Christ? According to one view, a man has not the proper faith, and cannot be called a Christian, unless he is willing to say that Jesus is God, unless he will put his name to a creed calling Christ the second person in the Trinity. It is thought that Jesus is pleased with us when we call him God, and displeased when we refuse to give him that great title. It is, however, not in the least necessary to understand how he is Divine; only let a man *say* Jesus is Divine, then he is orthodox. Indeed, it is rather a suspicious circumstance if he wishes to understand how Jesus is Divine.

All this, we notice, rests on the assumption that there is something meritorious in using certain

phrases about Jesus, — phrases to which we do not and cannot attach any clear meaning. It is thought that Christ will be bitterly offended if we do not give him his proper title, and that he cares, as men care, for outward honors.

The whole Catholic world was recently convulsed with the question whether the Pope should be called infallible. Each of the bishops had left the government of his respective diocese, and the Church was left to govern itself as it could without bishops, while they stayed at Rome to decide this question. But calling the Pope infallible does not make him so. He was just as liable to blunder afterward as before. The present pope, Pio Nono, began his career by encouraging free thought; he ends it by crushing it down. At first he thought it right to trust in the people; now he thinks it wrong. Then he believed in popular government; now he abhors it. If he was right then, he is wrong now; he could not possibly have been infallible both times. Declaring that he is infallible, even by a great unanimity, does not alter the fact.

Now, many Christians wish to call Christ God, just as many Catholics wish to call the Pope infallible. They seem to think something will be gained by this use of words, whether the words signify anything or not.

But the common-sense view of the Divinity of Jesus is this: Christ is Divine because his character is Divine, because he shows us God. In proportion as we see that Divine quality in his soul and life, we really believe in his Divinity. We may call him God ever so loudly, but we do not really believe him Divine till we understand that his generous love to his fellow-men is a Divine quality; that his devotion to truth, justice, freedom, holiness, is Divine; that, as God loves, he loved, to have us do God's will, rather than to say "Lord! Lord!"

When we say that Jesus was "the image of the invisible God"; when we call him "the word made flesh"; when we say that "God was manifest in the flesh"; when we accept his statements, "I and my Father are one," "He that has seen me has seen the Father," — what do we mean? According to one view, we mean that there is some mysterious hypostatic union between the first and second persons in the Trinity. According to the other view, we mean that Christ in his life and character shows us how God feels; that he reveals God; and that when we see how Christ loved, spoke, acted, under any circumstances, we see how God would act, feel, and speak under the same circumstances. That is common-sense.

Now, which of these two systems is most likely to produce a genuine love for Christ? Is it that which shrouds him with mystery, which makes his goodness mysterious, his work mysterious, his character supernatural; or that which makes all his life and work natural, human, brotherly? What do we usually love the most, the greatness which is far away above us in some higher position, some greatness of rank or office, or is it the greatness which being above us is still with us; which forgets rank and comes down to our side; which renounces position to be our brother; which, though ever so high up in power, character, wisdom, influence, does not disdain to sit by our side, to take our hand, to share our human fortunes and misfortunes, and put itself exactly on our level? That is the goodness which charms us, the greatness which is also lovable. And this is the goodness and greatness of Jesus. It is that, being in the very form of God, being the highest image of God, having come nearer to God than any other, he did not make that his boast or his glory, but rather took pride in being like all other men, making himself the friend of all, the pure and the impure, the true and the false, the respectable and the contemptible. This was what seemed to strike the Apostle Paul with wonder and admiration;

this is what has drawn human hearts to Jesus, — not his supernatural attributes, but his natural ones; not his mysterious Divinity, but his simple humanity.

Here are two exhibitions, we will suppose; the one is in legerdemain, the other one is in natural philosophy. Both the exhibitors do things which we cannot comprehend; both perform wonderful experiments. But the object of the first, in all that he does, is to make it seem as if *he* possessed some inexplicable and superhuman power. These marvels are done by him; he alone has power to do them. The object of the natural philosopher, on the other hand, is to call attention not to himself, to his skill, his adroitness, but to the laws of God, by which these strange results are produced. He always diverts attention from himself to the science which he is illustrating. While we listen, we do not think of the lecturer, his knowledge, his skill, but of the wonderful phenomena in nature which he is unfolding before us. When Faraday lectures, we do not think of Faraday, but of chemistry. When Agassiz lectures, we are entranced with the mysteries of radiata and mollusks. When Arago discourses, we rise to the stars, and feel the sweet influences of the Pleiades.

Now, it is quite evident that Jesus in all his teaching is not like the juggler, who wishes to direct the

astonishment of the audience to himself, but like the lecturer, who seeks to guide our wonder to the great facts and laws of the universe.

No doubt the lecturer may often have occasion to refer to himself in the course of his teaching. He may say, for example, "Please to give *me* your attention. I wish you now to listen to what I have to say on this point." Or he may tell his audience that *he* has been able to unfold some problem hitherto insoluble, or that he has traversed fields of knowledge before unexplored, or that he can show that the theories of former investigators are erroneous. But while doing this, he does it in order to lead us to the truth, and to persuade us to receive it.

And so also it is true that Jesus calls for faith in himself. He says that he is the door, that he is the true vine, that he is the good shepherd, that he is the living bread. But his object in all this is practical; it is to lead men not to himself, but through himself to God. How are we to have faith in Christ as the door? Not by bowing down and worshipping the door, but by rising up and going through it. How are we to have faith in him as the true vine? Not by loudly declaring that we believe him to be the vine, but by gathering and taking away the fruit he bears. How do we show our faith in him as the

living bread? Surely by feeding our souls with it day by day. And how do we most sincerely show our belief in him as the good shepherd, unless it be by joining his flock and following him?

Thus we may see that salvation by faith is a universal law of the moral universe. It is no arbitrary enactment or dogma of Christianity alone, but it is based in the very nature of man. All moral and spiritual life comes from faith in things unseen. All real knowledge has its roots in faith; all moral power is born out of faith; all generous goodness and truth is rooted in faith. He who doubts is a lost soul; that is, he has lost his way. Lost souls are simply those who have lost their way. Jesus came to seek and save these lost souls by giving them some clear, strong convictions by which to live and die. Inspired by him, "all who are in their graves" hear his voice and come forth. The poor, suffering, lonely man, bereft of all, sick, in prison, condemned to die, is safe and happy if he has faith in God, truth, immortality. What can man do to him? He may have trials of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment. But his hope sustains him, for he believes that neither life nor death, nor things present nor things to come, can ever separate him from the love of God.

What we need most of all and always is some great belief, some strong conviction, some realizing sense of spiritual things. Then we are young, though years and cares have marked wrinkles on our brow. We are full of life, though on the verge of the tomb. We are happy, hopeful, contented, and have an inward peace which is better than all the treasures of this world.

XVI.

ON NOT BEING AFRAID.

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MANY years ago I heard John Pierpont preach a sermon from the text, "I was afraid" (Matt. xxv. 25). It was in Louisville, Kentucky, and he preached it in the Unitarian church. A great congregation had assembled to hear him, for Kentuckians were good judges of oratory, and knew the power of Mr. Pierpont. His subject was the duty of free inquiry. He said that the faculty of thought was a talent for the use of which we must account to God. We were bound to exercise it on religious subjects, as well as upon other subjects, and we ought freely to inquire into the truth of the popular doctrines, even at the risk of being accounted heretics. The reason why so few actually examine the truth or falsehood of religious doctrines was, he said, that of the servant in the parable, — "They are afraid." So they bury their talent in the earth, and hide their Lord's money. Some, he said, are afraid of giving offence by denying popular doctrines. Some are afraid of displeasing their friends or their families. Some are afraid of

losing their position in society, some of losing their customers and their business. So they conform out of fear; and if they cannot believe, they can, at any rate, make believe. "Perhaps, however," Mr. Pierpont added, "you will not admit that you are influenced by such motives. You will say, '*We* are not afraid of human opposition or persecution. We are Kentuckians, and are not afraid of what people may do or say. But we confess that we are afraid of displeasing God by rejecting what we are told to believe.' Ah! but," continued Mr. Pierpont, "do you not see that this was exactly the condition of the servant in the parable? *He* was not afraid of his fellow-servants, he was afraid of his master. 'I knew *thee* to be an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strewed: *and I was afraid*, and went and hid thy talent in the earth.' It was fear of his *master*, not of his fellow-servants, which caused the servant to hide his talent in the earth. It was because he believed his master to be exacting, intolerant of weakness, determined to have all he could get out of his servants, — a man of strict rules, of inflexible purpose, just, but not merciful, requiring the uttermost farthing of every debt to be paid. It was taking this view of his master which paralyzed him. He thought he never could

do enough, so he would not do anything. But he was not logical in this: *fear* never is logical. If he believed his master so severe and so strict, he ought to have done all he could to meet his requisitions."

I well recollect the impression made by this discourse of Mr. Pierpont, especially the passage in which he said "*We are Kentuckians,*" at which point a thrill of satisfaction pervaded the congregation. And I have frequently thought I should like to show how often FEAR OF GOD is a temptation and a source of evil; and how courage toward God is a Christian virtue, and a very necessary one to enable us to perform our duties.

There is a kind of fear, I know, which is not inconsistent with courage, and which even makes men more courageous. Fear of danger, if it produces caution and precaution, gives presence of mind when danger comes. A man who has *no* sense of fear can have no real courage. Having no sense of danger, he can show no heroism in meeting danger. A blind man who walks directly up to a mad bull, not seeing the animal, shows no courage in so doing. But he who, to save a little child from being tossed or trampled, should, notwithstanding his fear, defy the savage beast, would be truly brave. Without some sense of fear there can be no courage; and

without *apprehension*, or the perception of coming danger, there can be no presence of mind when it comes. I have been on a steamboat on the Mississippi, where the passengers were mostly of that reckless, careless class which a superficial judgment would call brave. But when an accident happened they were all in the wildest confusion, and had no presence of mind. The anticipation of danger alone gives self-possession when danger comes.

Where there is danger, it ought to be seen and shunned. We should fear to run unnecessary risks. I would not expose my body unnecessarily to yellow-fever, or any other contagious disease. Nor would I expose my soul unnecessarily to the contagion of bad books, bad society, corrupting sights, and the fascinations of those pleasures which lead to destruction of soul and body both. But if I had a reason for running the risk, if the danger lay in the path of duty, then I should wish to encounter it, trusting in God.

We ought to fear evil, but we ought not to be afraid of it. A good soldier is one who neither slights nor dreads his enemy. A good general seeks to know exactly what is the power of his opponent, and whether with ten thousand men he can meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand.

But he is never afraid, never loses his self-possession, never despairs, never gives up. No matter what the odds are, no matter how desperate his position appears, he never buries his talent in the earth, but watches for every chance, takes advantage of every favorable circumstance; and so at last often redeems the lost battle by his inexhaustible hope and unfailing courage. He always fears, but is never afraid.

The good captain fears beforehand, when the danger is far off; so he is not afraid when it comes. The bad captain is bold and defiant beforehand; but when the overwhelming attack comes, he loses his head, and can do nothing. This shows the difference between the wise and the foolish fear. The wise fear is caution, and produces prudence; the foolish fear is cowardice, and ends in paralysis. To put the matter briefly, let us say that "*we ought often to fear, but ought never to be afraid.*"

We ought to fear God, but not to be afraid of him. The wicked servant in the parable thought about his master just as many people think about him now. The view of God given by many Christian preachers is that he is a hard man, reaping where he has not sown, gathering where he has not strewed, and commanding us to make bricks without straw.

The doctrine of Total Depravity, for instance, so

long taught in our churches, takes this view of God. According to this, God causes men to be born totally depraved, and then requires of them to be perfectly holy. He expects to gather grapes of thorns and figs of thistles. He sends people to hell for not doing what they are unable to do. Happily, this doctrine is passing by. But another view of God remains, which is also erroneous. It is that he is a purely moral being, a God of strict law, subject to law himself, not above it, one who would be glad to pardon if he could, but unable to do so; obliged to be "a hard man," incapable of helping his children, answering their prayers, or coming into any real communion with them. This *was* the God of Judaism; this *is* the God of mere materialism. Both views regard God mainly as LAW, — strict, impartial law, — not as love. But this view also separates the soul from him, and causes us to look on him not as a father, but a judge.

"Perfect love," says the Apostle, "casts out fear." As long as we fear God "we are not made perfect in love." The power of Christianity lies in giving us certain confidence in God. Those who speak of his wrath, who represent him as a God of terror, are not, while they do this, preaching Christianity. They have backslidden to paganism. Superstition

makes men afraid of God; Christianity never does that.

How would you like to have your little children made afraid of you? How would you like to have their nurse or their teacher, when you are absent, try to frighten them into doing right by telling them what an awful thing it would be to fall into the hands of their father and mother? Would you like to be described as stern, inflexible justice; to have the children taught to say "Our father is a consuming fire"? You would not like it? Then do as you would be done by. Do not believe about *your* Father what you do not wish your children to believe about *their* father. Learn to trust in God altogether and always, — when you are good, when you are bad. Then you are safe. This is the gospel.

The gospel means GOOD NEWS. It would not be a gospel if it were not *news*, and it would not be a gospel if it were not *good* news. It is always good news to us to be told that God really loves us, is ready to forgive us, and means to save us from evil. We find it hard to believe this; it seems too good to be true. It is no news that we are sinners. We know that well enough; and if it *were* news, it would certainly not be good news. Therefore the doctrine of human sinfulness is no part of the gospel. It is no news that

sin is always producing misery, that the sinner is always wretched. Therefore the doctrine of punishment is no part of the gospel. But the essence of the gospel, and that which gives it all its power is, that, *though we are sinners, and in spite of our sin,* God is our Father and our best friend; that he feels for us an infinite pity, an infinite tenderness, and asks us only to love him and trust him, so that he may save us from our sins by the power of that love and that trust.

Many people are afraid of free inquiry and its results. They fear that truth will be overturned by it; or, if not that, that harm will be done to weak consciences. No doubt some are to be fed on milk, and others on meat. But I do not think that we should ever be afraid of inquiry. It is too late in the day. Christianity has stood a thousand attacks, and stands very firmly still. It is because it is founded on a rock. The victory which Plotinus and Porphyry, Marcion and Lucian, the Emperor Julian and the great Stoics Aurelius, Epictetus, and Seneca, failed to gain, is not, to all appearance (as Macaulay says), reserved for any other in this age. Voltaire thought that he and his friends had demolished Christianity in France. His wit and words have faded away, but Christianity is as strong as before. This

teaches us not to be afraid of free inquiry, but to welcome it.

But many people are daunted by the evils of life. They lose their courage and hope when they contemplate the amount of poverty, vice, sickness, pain, ignorance, brutality, knavery, fraud, in the world. They say, What is the use? How little can we do to oppose this black flood which sweeps on and on, notwithstanding the dikes which we oppose to it by means of churches, schools, laws, and Christian civilization! Why try to do anything? We can do so little! Let us try to keep ourselves as clean as we can. Let us put our own talent in a clean cloth, and bury it where it will not get lost. That is all we can hope to accomplish.

A good deal of Christianity has gone on this principle. It has only aimed at keeping the good good. It has put good people together in churches, and left the bad people to themselves. This is *the napkin theory of Christianity.* It was the source of monasticism. Every monastery and nunnery is a napkin in which a certain amount of innocence is wrapt up and hidden away to be kept safe. Many of our Protestant churches are little better than monasteries. They also aim at putting good people together, not at seeking and saving bad ones. All this

arises, not from inhumanity, or indifference to sorrow and sin, but from *fear*. They are afraid to attack evil, — it seems so strong, so much stronger than God or Christ or Christianity. It is because we do not believe that Jesus is really the Christ *now;* the King of the world now; we do not believe that his religion is really strong enough to cure the sin, vice, and woe of mankind. We are expecting a *second* coming of Christ at some future time, when he will come in the clouds, with angel and trumpet. We want a sign from heaven; something more powerful than truth and love. The real evil is want of faith in the power of the gospel; want of faith in a Christ as a present Saviour, not merely a past Saviour or a future Saviour. We need to believe that *now is the accepted time, that now is the day of salvation.* Therefore we say to God, "I am afraid." We believe God to be a hard master, — asking us to convert the world, and not giving us any power with which to do it.

The only faith which saves us is that which enables us to save others. And this faith is to believe that God is always ready to give us the power to do anything which ought to be done. If there is a woe, a wrong, a sin, to be removed, then God has given us power with which to do it. If we can believe this, we shall never be afraid.

This is a very simple test of genuine faith in Christ. If you have faith enough in Jesus as the Christ of God to enable you to undertake his work of saving your fellow-men from sin and misery here and hereafter, then you may be sure that you have the true faith. Hereby do we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. But if you have not the courage to do this work, if you are afraid to attempt it lest you should not succeed, then, though you preach faith in Christ as the Omnipotent God, and utter that doctrine with the tongues of men and angels, yet you prove by your own cowardice in the presence of evil that you have no real faith in him as an actual Saviour of actual men and women. Faith, if genuine, works by love, and love casts out fear.

Some persons are afraid of being laughed at. The hell which terrifies them is ridicule. I think this was the fear which led Peter to deny his master. He found himself among a crowd to whom Jesus appeared as a wild fanatic, whom no sensible person could possibly esteem. To profess himself a disciple of such a one would have been to expose himself to the derision of the soldiers and maid-servants. Peter was always impressed by those around him; he was one of that class which agrees with the last

speaker. Such is the habit of sympathetic natures. They take the color of their surroundings. They cannot bear to be thought queer. If a person says "How singular!" that daunts them. So they do not stand by their colors, but desert them. They might bear a volley of shot, but a volley of laughter makes them run. This awful experience of Peter did not quite cure him; for afterward he had a double face to the Gentiles when he was with them alone, and afterward when Jews were present. So Paul had to rebuke him to his face for his duplicity. This is the way with those who have large organs of sympathy and of the love of approbation. Often the very sweetness of their disposition exposes them to this temptation. The cure for it is to go down deep into principles; to see clearly what their convictions are, and so to cleave to them. The superficial froth of social opinion is really not anything to be afraid of. One person who knows what he believes and why he believes it is more than a match for a crowd who only think what they suppose other people think, because every one else thinks it. A man with a clear conviction in his mind is like Horatius; he can hold the bridge against an army. Stand fast on your instincts, — your instinctive convictions, your instinctive sense of right, your instinctive feeling of what is honorable.

For, as Mr. Emerson says, "let only the single man plant himself on his instincts, and this great world will, by and by, come round him." Mr. Emerson himself has been an example of this. His notions were at first ridiculed and opposed as absurd and dangerous novelties; now they are welcomed by the best brains in Europe and America.

Sometimes we are afraid of being called afraid. We run foolish risks to show our courage; but we are really hereby showing our cowardice. Where duelling is popular, men fight duels because they are afraid of being called cowards if they do not fight. Young men brought up in temperate and virtuous habits very often take their first step in a ruinous dissipation for fear of being called afraid. "What? are you afraid to drink? afraid to smoke? afraid to play for money?" "Not I," he replies. "Who's afraid?" So also may people go into expenses beyond their means, expenses they have no right to incur, lest people should say that they are afraid to spend their money. The last act of moral courage is not merely to conquer your own fear, but to conquer your fear of what others may think you fear.

Some people are subject to bondage all their lives from fear of poverty. They are always anxious lest they should die in the poorhouse. But suppose we

do have to die in the poorhouse; we shall not mind it when we are dead, I suppose. Why be afraid of what may never come? Jesus told his disciples to see how God clothed the flowers and fed the birds. Let us look and see the wonderful way in which he feeds and clothes the inhabitants of a great city every day. Who distributes the work to be done? who says that so many men shall be employed in trade, so many in manufactures; that there shall be so many blacksmiths, carpenters, painters; so many druggists, provision-dealers, booksellers, hardware men, physicians, dentists? See by what curious social laws society is arranged, cities built, civilization advanced. Then go, coward, into the homes of the poor; of those who have no house, but only a room, paid for by the week or month; no bonds and mortgages, but only their day's labor with which to buy their daily bread. They stand close to Providence. They lean on God, not on bonds and coupons. See how contented and cheerful they are. They know on whom they depend. Without, perhaps, saying it to themselves, they know that some power is taking care of them every day, and they are made courageous by that experience.

Some people are afraid of death, and so are afraid all their lifetime. They seem to think that God,

who provides for them while they live in this wonderful home, will desert them when they die. They think that he, who has ordained death for all his children, has left us to die without any care or provision for what will become of us at that time. When we are well, and can take some care of ourselves, we know that God cares for us; but we think that when we become utterly helpless, then he deserts us. But soft as infant's sleep shall be the coming of death to you and to me. Sweet shall be that rest as it falls on the soul weary with work, and the body exhausted by years. Tenderly shall that death-cloud envelope us, and hide all familiar things from our failing sight. And when we awake again, with no abrupt transition, with no astonishment, but with a serene satisfaction, shall we find ourselves softly led into new being in the midst of old and new friends. We shall be in the presence of a more divine beauty than that of this world; and with faculties opening into greater power to meet the new knowledge and the new work of that next world, that vast beyond.

Do you ask me how I know this? Why, I know it just as your little children know that when they go home at night, tired and weary, they go to find their little bed all made up for them, their supper all

ready on the table, their father's arms, their mother's lap, — their older sisters to untie their cloak and help them change their shoes. They do not really know it, but they believe in it. They are not afraid to go home. No, they run home gladly, believing in the love waiting for them there. So we may run home when God calls us, sure that an infinite love awaits us in our Father's house with its many mansions.

The miracles which Christ wrought seemed mostly intended to convince the disciples of his power; to give them confidence in him, as one able to do all that he undertook. They were not intended to operate as signs, and to convince the world generally of his being Christ. They were chiefly to educate his own Apostles into faith and courage. That order of miracles we do not now see. But there is another kind of miracle which we all can witness whenever we will. It is the power which God will give to us with which to do good, whenever we are ready to go in his strength to try to do it. Do you know of any case of vice or of sorrow which it seems almost impossible to relieve or cure? Go and see if God will not work a miracle through your mind and heart, giving your actions and words a power not their own, so that you can make the blind see, the lame walk, and raise up the dead. You must go in faith, how-

ever, trusting entirely that, if the thing ought to be done, God will give you strength to do it. You must go also in the spirit of prayer; not with the prayer of words, but that essential prayer which consists in keeping one's self in a condition of faith and hope, leaning on God.

Such miracles as these are being done every day wherever there is any genuine Christianity. They demand as much courage as has usually been shown on the field of battle. It is a fight, "not against flesh and blood," but against the powers of darkness and "spiritual wickedness in high places." It would be easier for many a man to charge with the six hundred into the Valley of Death, than to do what John Wesley did, when he took his hymn-book and stood on a barrel at the corner of two streets in the foulest quarter of London, and there, surrounded by a crowd of blasphemous and jeering heathens, sang and preached and prayed till a great quiet came over them, and the Spirit of God brought tears into eyes unused to weep. This is the courage born of faith, and it overcomes the world. It comes from believing in a living God, a Friend, a Father; it comes from believing in a practical gospel and a present Saviour. This gave Luther courage to stand alone against the universal Church and the German Empire; against

a venerable past, gray with the accumulated reverence of a thousand years; against the unanimity of Europe; to stand alone, but not alone, — for he leaned on God.

This is the courageous faith which carries goodness forward. It does not merely build forts to defend what is already conquered from the domains of ancient night, but it levies armies to assault evil in its own intrenchments. It inspired the courage with which William Penn and his Quakers went among the savage Indians, with no weapons but justice and good-will. It inspired the French Jesuits, who with similar success penetrated the wilderness of Canada; looked on Niagara, which had never before been seen by civilized man; ascended the lakes, crossed the portage, and floated their canoes on the waters of the Mississippi. For this faith is always the same, in all churches, Catholic or Protestant. It is walking with God, to do his will, in his strength. It never says "I was afraid"; it knows no fear.

XVII.

HOPE.

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HOPE.

It is said of Jesus, that "he knew what was in man." This was part of his power; for a knowledge of man is as necessary for a religious teacher as a knowledge of God. But religious people have not been famous for their knowledge of men. Ministers, especially, have often been singularly ignorant of the world and its ways. Their education has been such as to prevent them from acquiring this knowledge. Ministers have been usually made out of good little boys, who spent their time at school and college in studying their books; who then went to a divinity school and studied books several more years, and who never saw anything of the world or of mankind. They have had few of the common trials, none of the usual temptations, of men. They yet stand up in a pulpit to direct and advise and teach.

I recollect, when I was a boy, there was an old gentleman in the town where I spent the summer, who was a type of that sort of minister. He was a good, kind-hearted man, but like an infant in his

knowledge of the world. He was steeped in books, and talked about a Bible he was supposed to be preparing, but which never was written. He preached forty or fifty years in that parish, and I suppose seldom uttered a sentence which had any bearing on human life or human conduct. The people, however, thought it all right; they had never known anything else, and they did not think it a part of a minister's duty to know what is in man. Fortunately, another sort of ministers is coming now, — those who know something of the world and its ways, and are expected to help men to live good lives here in this world.

But Jesus knew what was in man. Having suffered, being tempted, he was able to help those who suffer and are tempted.

What most persons call a knowledge of human nature is merely a knowledge of the average man, or men in masses. It is human nature as it appears in life and conduct. The great masters of this science are those who write fables and utter proverbs, — Æsop, Solomon, and Dr. Franklin. But the average man is in all men; and so these proverbs are universally applicable. It is this sort of knowledge which enables one to face the world and make his way through life. It comes from experience, and is

rather apt to consist in a knowledge of human folly and weakness than of human strength. Men who pride themselves on their knowledge of the world usually mean their knowledge of the follies and weaknesses of men. They usually assume that all men are selfish, that all have a price, and that by means of bribery and cunning you can attain to any success in the world. And they do, very often, succeed for a time, and acquire a certain notoriety; but the fabric they build on the foundation of human weakness is itself weak, and is sure to fall sooner or later, and come to nothing. It is a house built on the sand.

Such a man was Louis Napoleon. His system of government and his plan of action was to make use of men's vices and to discourage their virtues. During twenty years he did all he could to demoralize France, to feed its love of military glory, to cultivate its passion for display, parade, luxury, extravagance. When he became Emperor, Victor Hugo wrote a book about him, very keen and very able, called Napoleon the Little. But it seemed for a long time that Victor Hugo was mistaken. Napoleon appeared to be a great success and a mighty power. All Europe admired and feared him. But at last the bubble broke, and now all men see that he *was*

"Napoleon the Little," and that his empire, built on human vice and human folly, was weaker than water. He dies, and what good work of his remains?

The first man who dared resist Napoleon, and who showed his weakness to the world, was Abraham Lincoln, his opposite in all respects. Lincoln was honest, and believed in honesty. He had no tricks. He did not know how to flatter or to bribe. He knew men, for he had grown up in hardship, labor, trial. But he retained his faith in honesty, and looked for honest men to serve him. When our war was over, he requested Napoleon to remove his troops out of Mexico, and Napoleon consented. A writer in Blackwood, Lever, who had persistently ridiculed the North and Lincoln during the whole war, writing under the name of "Cornelius O'Dowd," then said that the United States had done what no European government — no, nor all the European governments united — would have dared to do. The United States had told Napoleon to withdraw his armies, and had been obeyed.

Cunning may endure for a night, but honesty comes in the morning. Napoleon, who began in strength, ended in corruption and defeat; Lincoln, who began in almost hopeless weakness, ended in triumphant success. The knowledge of human na-

ture which sees in man only weakness and selfishness is not as wise as that which believes that, besides his weakness and sin, he is essentially honest and sincere, — loving goodness, and not loving evil.

What we call Christianity is the influence which came originally from Christ, modified, developed, diluted, adulterated, but still retaining its original germ. It has been modified by the influx of thought from other religions. The doctrine of the Trinity probably came from Platonism. The doctrine of sacrifices from Judaism and heathenism. The wonderful organization of the Romish Church is a continuation of the old Roman Empire in a new form. Christianity has been adulterated by these importations. It has also been greatly diluted by compromises with worldly thought and worldly habits. On the other hand, it has been developed by the spiritual and religious experiences and studies of sixty generations of earnest believers. But through all its changes it retains its loyalty to the person and character of Jesus; and this is its salvation and its distinctive character.

Now, the gospel, as it lay in the mind of Jesus, was an eminently HUMAN religion. It did not trample on man, as so many religions have done, but it respected human nature. It did not begin by cursing, but by blessing. The commencement of Christ's

first sermon consists of the Beatitudes. He does not begin by saying, "Cursed are the proud, cursed are the luxurious, cursed are the covetous, cursed are the revengeful, cursed are the corrupt in heart, cursed are the prosperous," but, instead, he blessed the "poor in spirit," the "meek," the "sorrowful," the "pure in heart," the "merciful." He did not put Total Depravity at the foundation of his theology, but human capacity. No one ever trusted in human nature as much as Jesus; no one ever saw so much good in it as he. No matter how poor and mean people were, he always spoke to them as children of God. Before they had expressed their penitence or sorrow for their sins he told them their "sins were forgiven." He said, "The Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins." It was because he was the Son of man; full of the spirit of humanity, — capable of looking into the heart and seeing its profound longing for something better. Where others saw only degradation and shame, he saw promise and hope. "Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more." He saw that most men need to be encouraged, not to be rebuked or condemned; and so he said, "Come unto me, ye who are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

There are two views of human nature which have

prevailed, and prevail still. One is that which considers man as essentially sinful and naturally depraved; the other, that which considers sin as only the result of ignorance, and needing nothing but knowledge to cure it. Both of these views are partial, and imply a defective view of human nature. To regard sin as natural to man is to insult the nature God gave him, and to deprive him of hope and self-respect. On the other hand, to consider sin as a negative quality, being merely the absence of goodness, does not accord with the sense of remorse which we feel in view of our transgressions. Jesus took neither view of man. He said it was better to cut off the right hand, and pluck out the right eye, than to let them lead us into that hell of evil whose worm does not die and whose fire is not quenched. Yet he said, "The spirit is willing," if "the flesh is weak." He said, "Those who hunger and thirst after righteousness shall be filled." He said, "Seek, and ye shall find"; "Come unto me, and I will give you rest," — implying that men naturally love goodness and not evil; and also that men have the power of seeking goodness, coming to it, and choosing it, and so of finding it and being blessed by it.

Jesus saw in all men the possibility of infinite progress; saw in every man an immortal soul with

unbounded capacities for knowledge, love, and action. So, to him, all men were honorable. No matter how low and mean and evil they might be now, he looked on them all as God's children, made for an infinite development. He believed in the capacities of the human spirit, and said it was better to lose the whole world than to peril one's own soul. This profound view which he took of the value of man has been one of the great influences to promote human progress. It was a prophetic hope, born out of a deep insight into human nature. And it has been the seed and stimulus at once of human civilization and advancement.

For, before we can have any progress, we must have faith in the possibility of progress; we must believe in the capacity and destiny of man. This faith Jesus has implanted in Christian thought; he has put this element into it. We cannot look on the meanest human being without seeing something more than his meanness. We see in him a great loss, a mighty disappointment. We see that he is throwing away a vast opportunity. We look below the surface, and beneath the superficial evil we find the possibility of a mighty good. Then, the severity of censure, the sharpness of rebuke, which come from Christian pulpits and Christian ethics, is itself

a sign of the worth of the sinner. We should not blame bad men as we do if we had not the conviction that they might have done so much better. Even the old-fashioned idea of a Day of Judgment, when all men are to be brought together in one place, and all their conduct investigated, had a tendency to elevate our conceptions of human nature. Who would think of judging a flock of sheep or a race of tigers for their sins? To be capable of sin is itself a sign of greatness. No creature in this world, except man, can commit sin; for only man has conscience and freedom, the sense of responsibility and the knowledge of eternal law. Deep-rooted in the consciousness of all Christian communities is this sense of a great responsibility; and it is an element of grandeur. It elevates the idea of man. It would be a bad day for the world if the teachings of a materialistic philosophy should persuade us that man is the result of external influences only; that his soul is the product of a little carbon and a little oxygen; that his brain secretes thought as his liver secretes bile; and that, when his body is dissolved, there is no possibility of his surviving. Even the coarse and vulgar notions of a hell of fire and a heaven of feasting and song, even the heaven and hell of John Calvin or Mohammed, are nobler than this reduction

of the soul to earth and body. I had rather believe — as Lord Bacon says — all the fables of the Talmud, than to lose my faith in the idea that man is essentially soul, and not body.

The principle of human progress is faith in the power of the soul. It is this which makes the difference which exists between stationary Asia and advancing Europe. Where there is faith in the capacity of the soul there is hope, and hope is the spring of progress. We are expecting new developments of human nature. We have a profound conviction that the possibilities of man are exhaustless. Therefore inventors are busy with their discoveries; therefore science is investigating the universe to find new laws; therefore social reformers are busy with their plans for renewing society and curing its evils; therefore philanthropists meet in convention to devise methods of curing vice, reforming criminals, putting a stop to war, preventing pauperism, removing disease; therefore missionaries go to China, to India, to New Zealand, to Greenland, to the Feejee Islands, to inspire a Christian faith in the most degraded minds; therefore in politics we hope on and hope ever, seeking to teach nations self-government, and to replace despotism with the principles of liberty. Little of all this is to be found outside

of Christendom; there, for thousands of years, men go on as their fathers did before them, hoping nothing, and therefore changing nothing; sitting still, like the Arabian prince in the story, with half his body marble; or lying, like the frozen elephants in the Arctic seas, so stiff as to be incapable even of further change, arrested for ten thousand years just between death and decay.

What makes this mighty difference between Christian countries and all others, except the hope which Christ has inspired in the human heart, — the sense of the greatness of the soul? Do you say it is the progress of science and intellectual activity? Yes, doubtless; but why does that prevail in Christendom, and nowhere else? Why do we not go to Turkey and Arabia for our science? Why not ask the Brahmans for our art? Why not turn to the Buddhists for our inventions? There is something deeper behind all the science, art, literature, invention of Christendom, — some motive-power back of it all. We can communicate to ethnic nations the externals of our civilization, but not its soul. We can teach the Chinese how to make a railroad, the Turks how to run steamboats, and to wear hats instead of turbans; but we cannot communicate to them the *spirit* of invention and progress, unless we can give to them Christianity itself.

I go into a great manufacturing establishment. I see carding-machines at work, spindles whirling, looms clashing, machinery in motion in every room. If I am satisfied with this, and look no farther, I am like those who say that science and intellectual activity are the cause of Christian civilization. But if I look farther, for the source of all this movement, I am taken into a room below, where a mighty engine is at work. The steam-power in the boilers is driving the piston, ten-feet stroke, whose steady noiseless movement turns the great fly-wheel, twenty tons in weight, and communicates the power which sets in motion the machinery in every part of the building. So, behind all the movement and activity of Christian lands is the great motive-power which sustains it all, — faith in human nature, inspired by Christ, producing a boundless hope, a perpetual expectation, a sense of possibilities of progress unexhausted and inexhaustible.

So, too, our hope for ourselves has its root in Christ's hope concerning us. The hope of Jesus for man was not vague and general, but personal and specific. He spoke with confidence to individuals. He said to the sinful woman, "Go, and sin no more," as though sure that she could do it. He said to another, "Be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven thee,"

inspiring him with confidence that the power of sin over him was destroyed. Jesus had infinitely more hope for others than they had for themselves. But it was not a blind confidence; he saw their defects and faults very plainly.

The few records that we possess of the personal intercourse of Jesus with those around him show great insight into character. He seemed to understand every one, — John the Baptist, Peter, Thomas, Nicodemus, Pilate, Paul, the Pharisees, Judas, — and the peculiarity of his judgment of them was its liberality. He was only harsh toward the Pharisees, and his harshness to them consisted simply in describing them as they were. He uttered no vague or general denunciations, but brought specific charges against them. He spoke of their pomp and pride, their oppression of the poor, their substitution of ceremonies and ritual for love to God and man; and it was necessary to do this, for their influence was corrupting the character of the people. Their type of religion was the popular and prevailing one, and it needed to be exposed and resisted. He came, like the Day of Judgment, to reveal to the proud, self-satisfied, and powerful their faults and sins, but also to comfort and uplift the poor and humble sinners, who had no confidence in themselves. He saw

all the weakness of Peter. He told him he would deny him thrice; but he also said, "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." He did not excommunicate Thomas because he denied the resurrection, but gave him the physical evidence which he demanded. Thomas was a positive philosopher, who could only believe on the evidence of his senses; and Jesus met his case. Nicodemus was afraid to compromise his position by coming in the day, so Jesus let him come in the night. Impatient John the Baptist sent a rude message to Jesus, asking if he was going to be the Messiah, or whether they should have to look for another. He excused this rudeness, and said John was not a reed shaken by the wind, nor a man clothed in soft raiment; but, though not polite, he was a great prophet, and had done a great work.

It is this trust in human nature which Jesus felt which gives us faith in ourselves. We all know so well our own weakness and folly and sin; we know so well how we fail in keeping our resolutions, how often we are false and mean, how often we are hard and cold, how often we are too indolent to fulfil our duties, too selfish to care for others, — we know this so well that we should despair of ever being any better, were it not that Jesus Christ has such a hope for

man that it inspires us all with hope for ourselves. This is the motive back of all other motives in our soul. Into this Christian faith we are born. We grow up into it unconsciously. We are moved by it without our own knowledge. Long before we come into any living personal communion with Christ as our Master and Saviour we are inspired by this, his all-pervading hope for man. The usual theological way of expressing this is to say that "Christ died for us," and that every soul has value because "Christ died for it." The meaning is, that Christ had a profound conviction that every soul was of priceless value in the eyes of God, and that every soul was made for an infinite progress, and therefore he was willing to give himself wholly, and to die, in order that men might be brought to God.

It is this same faith in the value of the soul which is a chief proof of immortality.

You have, let us suppose, among your other possessions, some jewels of great value. One is a diamond, an extremely brilliant and beautiful stone; another is a ruby of a deep, rich crimson color; another is a sapphire, blue as the sky; another, a lovely emerald with deep, rich green. You have been obliged suddenly to move, and have destroyed, thrown away, left behind you, some of your pos-

sessions which were of little value. How do I know that you did not throw away your jewels too? I do not know it. I have not seen you to ask the question. But I do not believe that you have done so, because I know how you prized them. How do I know that God does not throw away our souls when we die, — at the end of five years, twenty years, seventy years? I do not know it. I cannot see the souls of my friends after their death. But I do not believe he has done so, because I know how much he values the soul. Jesus has convinced me that God, his Father and ours, looks on us as his children, has made us for immortal progress, has endowed us with capacities which only begin to be unfolded in this world, loves us more than we love our own children. If we believe this, death is abolished. We have no fear that God will throw our souls away when we die. If we so mourn the loss of our children and those we love, and cannot bear to let them go, even when we expect to meet them again, will God create our souls merely to destroy them again at the end of a few years? It is impossible. No one who looks at man with the eyes of Jesus can believe it for a moment. If we regard man as only a bodily machine, we may believe it; not if we see in him a soul made by God in his

own image, and endowed with incalculable powers of thought, love, aspiration, improvement.

That which has given power to Christianity and has made it the religion of the civilized world, which has caused it to grow with the growth of humanity, and strengthen with its strength, is, in my opinion, this, — that it is based on faith in man. It is not founded in doubt. It is full of hope, not fear, concerning human progress in this life and the life to come. It is an encouraging religion. It invites us to trust in God as our Father, in man as our brother, in ourselves as made for progress and perfection. It may not seem, at first, as wise in this as those systems which consider man as no better than a mass of depravity, or a machine moved by appetite and desire. But in the long run it takes possession of the world; it fills human life with sweetness, and purifies the soul from evil; it comforts the sorrowful; it supports the weak; it speaks peace to the dying, and illuminates the darkness of the grave with an immortal light. Did Jesus know what was in man, then, or did he not?

XVIII.

THE PATIENCE OF HOPE.

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PATIENCE is a virtue much commended. But, if it were what it is often thought, I doubt if it should be so much praised and so greatly recommended. When you hear of a very patient person, do you not often think of him as passively enduring, without complaint, persecution, wrong, and evil? That is the ideal saint, who has come down to us from the Middle Ages. The theory then was that Christianity consisted in suffering meekly all evil. The saints were holy men who made a merit of suffering, and were particularly glad when they were abused and wronged, because this gave them the merit of martyrdom. Their pictures represent them as emaciated, weak, and with heads bowed like a bulrush. The object of Christianity, it was thought, was to make such characters as that, — without any power or wish to resist injury. They had no wish nor power to put down villany and rascality. They were too weak to contradict falsehood. That was the ideal of patience which has come down to us as the quality recommended in the Bible.

But if this be patience, then, it seems to me, patience would do more harm than good in the world. It is easy to be too patient, in this sense. To be dumb before outrage, as a sheep before its shearers, may be right sometimes. When resistance can do no good, when we have uttered our protest and it is ineffectual, then it is often more dignified to bear evil in silence. Then our silence is perhaps the loudest protest. Jesus was patient, in this way, before the Jewish Sanhedrim, and his silence troubled them more than if he had spoken. "Why do not you answer?" said the high-priest; "do not you hear what these men accuse you of?" Still he stood silent. Imagine the scene. All his enemies are around him; he is helpless in their midst. They bring witnesses to prove him guilty of death. He hears all the charges, and makes no reply. His mind is far away. His work is done. He sees not the haggard, stern faces of his enemies, not the base looks of the witnesses. He sees, perhaps, his own Galilean lake, sleeping in its beauty among the hills; he sees the scenes of his childhood, where he first met God in the solitude and serenity of nature. He sees the place where he knew first the greatness of his mission. He sees the green summit of Mt. Tabor, where he talked with Moses and Elijah

of the work he was to do; the only hour of his life when he met human beings who could comprehend him. Calm, strong, indifferent to what was passing around him, he stood in the silence of his own thoughts. What they choose to accuse him of, how they meant to bring him to his cross, was nothing to him now. He had passed beyond all that, and so he was silent. "As a sheep before its shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." But even that silence was not the passive, meek, unresisting patience which we commonly attribute to Jesus. It was the golden silence which speaks louder than words. It told them that he knew that his fate was already sealed, and that they had already determined that he should die. "Why go through the form of a defence? Let us finish at once, since you have all determined on my death. This is nothing to me; this is your affair."

But Jesus had not this passive, unresisting patience at other times. He opposed the Scribes and Pharisees with the keenest severity of indignant rebuke. He exposed them to the people; he threw a beam of sunlight into their conduct and character. He told the people how selfish their leaders were, how cruel, how false to their own teachings; how they lived to gratify their vanity; how they turned the most sacred offices of religion into a show. Jesus

had no patience with hypocrisy. He could be very patient with the failings of the weak; he could forgive the sins of those who fell under the influence of too strong temptation; but he was by no means patient with the oppression of the powerful, the luxury of the affluent, the hypocrisy of the religious leaders.

It is not well to be too patient with things like these. Our work here is to fight; we are all soldiers of the cross. We are not here to compromise, to concede, to submit to evil, but to resist it. We are to resist it with the sword of truth; not angrily, not bitterly, not resentfully, but with determination. It is no easy thing to live in this world and do one's duty. Evil fashion is so strong, custom is so despotic, that it is sometimes necessary to oppose them very actively.

True patience is not passive, but active. It is holding on. It is to be not weary in well-doing, though there seems to be no success. It is not to draw back, or give up, but to persevere, whether men hear or whether they forbear. It is — to use an old word and a good one, though somewhat passed by — longanimity, which is the sister of magnanimity. Magnanimity is greatness of soul, which aims at vast and noble ends, rising above all things base and

mean. Longanimity is the persevering purpose which keeps to its idea without rest and without haste; not making a pause nor leaving a void. The purpose is so strong that it is not disturbed by difficulty, nor terrified by danger, nor chilled by neglect. It holds on. That is the meaning of patience in Scripture.

Job is called a patient man in this true sense; he certainly was not very patient in the popular sense of the word. He complained bitterly sometimes of his sufferings; he could not see why he was called to bear so much. He could not understand the justice of his being punished. Both he and his friends thought his trials a punishment. They said, "Since you are punished so severely, you must be a great sinner. Now confess it." He said, "I know I am not a great sinner; then why am I punished so severely? I will not say I am a sinner till I see how I am one. I will not lie to please God. I will hold fast my integrity, and not let it go; it is all I have left." Job cursed the day of his birth; he described his misery in language whose gloomy pathos makes all other tragedy pale. Then how was he patient? He was patient in this sense, that *he held on;* he did not give up. He did not yield to evil, nor lose his courage nor his sense of right. He did not make any weak concession, as his friends advised. He did

not tell lies to please God. Bereft of all, lonely, wretched, his unconquerable mind remained unshaken. He stands, in the Hebrew story, like Prometheus in the Greek mythology. Prometheus, punished for the godlike crime of being kind to men, and for bestowing on them the sacred gift of fire, was chained to a rock on the frozen Caucasus, and tormented day and night by the orders of Jupiter. But he refused to obey unjust commands, and defied evil from his throne of suffering. So Prometheus and Job stand, grand forms of endurance and fortitude, age after age, unconquerable, indestructible. So the awful mind of Cato stood alone, resisting the advance of tyranny amid the downfall of Roman freedom.

So, in history, stand out the grand forms of the martyrs for truth and right. Joan of Arc, going up in her chariot of flame; Savonarola, the heroic prophet and reformer before Luther; Huss, teacher of truth. These are they, who, being lifted up, draw all men unto them. Their heroic endurance in the cause of truth and right exalts them as solemn heralds of a better age to come. They stand like the castled crag of Drachenfels, despoiled and shattered, but more noble in its ruin than in its prime; beat upon by the storms of ages, but looking down in its indestructible majesty over

wide and winding valleys of modern peace and comfort below. And among these types of heroic patience shall also stand *our* country's martyr, Abraham Lincoln, with the sad strength in his eyes, and the patience of hope in his heart.

True patience is the power of enduring calmly, quietly, without passion or excitement, a host of difficulties and trials, because inwardly sustained by a strong purpose, a great aim, a noble hope. The inventor, who is working out his idea, is patient with poverty, ridicule, repeated failure, sustained by the sure hope of ultimate success. This is what is meant by the patience of hope. If you wish to be patient, you must possess your soul by means of some great expectation. We can bear a great deal so long as we have hope. The boy who is going to fish in the brook for trout does not mind the flies and mosquitoes so long as he has hope of catching fish. But if he has bad luck in fishing, then the mosquitoes become intolerable. There are swarms of mosquitoes about us all in our daily life; little annoyances, little perplexities, little aggravations of all sorts. The man who goes to his place of business has his mosquitoes there. Things go wrong. He is vexed by the blunders of those with whom he has to deal. He is vexed with

the little deceptions, knaveries, rascalities, of business. He is vexed with his own stupidity and his own blunders. He comes home at night irritable, impatient, and shows it. He does not reflect that his wife has had her little swarm of mosquitoes around her also all day. Things have not gone well with her. The kitchen machinery has got out of order; work has been delayed; the mechanics who agreed to come to mend the range did not come; the water-pipes are out of sorts; the washing has to be put off; the children have come from school out of humor, they have had *their* mosquitoes too. At last, after a long and hard day, she has contrived to smooth the raven down of all these difficulties till they smiled. The children have had their supper, and have gone happily to bed. She has been kept up by the hope of having a pleasant evening with her husband. But he comes home cross as — well, I do not know exactly how cross a bear is, but we will say that he comes home prepared to indulge, in the bosom of his family, that ill-humor which he has been obliged to repress during the day. Now, if he also had been hoping to have a quiet, pleasant evening with his wife, both would be rested, and the mosquitoes driven away until to-morrow.

I do not wish to be too severe on the men; so, if

you please, you may reverse the picture. It is the husband who comes home hoping to have a nice quiet time with his family, and is met at the door by another swarm of mosquitoes in the form of querulous complaints, fault-finding, lamentations, and tears.

True patience is born of hope. Even the hope of some very little pleasure or comfort near by enables us to bear a great many vexations. Every one should have some enjoyments to look forward to, something pleasant to do, some pleasant people to meet, a good book kept to read in a quiet hour. Self-denial preserves hope. It is better to work hard, looking forward to some future enjoyment or satisfaction, than to exhaust the pleasure before we have earned the right to that relaxation. The two extremes of the social scale are almost equally without hope. One is hopeless because pressed down so low by want and hardship that hope never comes. The other is hopeless because, possessing everything and exhausting everything, all hope has gone, and there is nothing left to hope for. Both, therefore, become impatient, irritable, fretful, — those who have too little, and those who have too much. Both especially need the greater hopes of Christianity to cure this disease of impatience. They need to hope for others, to hope for social improvement; to put their

heart into larger expectations outside of themselves; to take an interest in the progress of humanity, the triumph of truth, the advance of social reform, the coming of Christ in this life, the expectation of meeting him in another.

The gospel of Christ can inspire a perfect patience by awakening an unconquerable, undying hope. The patience of hope is not passive, but active; full of life, enthusiasm, and energy. There is more genuine patience displayed by a modern reformer who pursues his end unflinchingly through good report and evil report, than by the ancient anchorite who buried himself in a cave, and thought godliness consisted in being hungry, lazy, cold, and dirty.

During our civil war we had examples of both kinds of patience, — the passive, enduring patience, and the active, working patience. The colored people of the South could do nothing but wait till their deliverance came. And so they waited, waited, waited, firm in their faith that the day of salvation would come. How well they waited! How they wasted no strength in unavailing insurrection, committed no crimes in their anger, gave no occasion of triumph to their enemies, we all know. This is one of the illustrations in history of the patience which

watches, and waits, and bears long, and never faints or gives way.

On the other hand, the Northern people showed the highest example of patience of another kind. They bore the most cruel disappointments, the most terrible disasters, with firm, determined minds. They never gave way, never lost hope, never shrank from any sacrifice. They had laid on the altar of their country life, fortune, and sacred honor; and nobly did they redeem every pledge. They possessed their souls in a patience of the highest kind. Through four long, stormy years, in which hardly a gleam of light shone, they went steadily on. The Scripture says "the just shall live by faith," and "we are saved by hope." This nation lived by faith during the long rebellion, — by faith in God, who would surely maintain the right, who could not suffer evil to triumph over good. They lived by faith in the ideas of the Union, — Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity; by faith in themselves and their cause. They lived by faith, and they were saved by hope. Their hope grew stronger from day to day; they became ever more sure of victory. For, as hope produces patience, so also does patience increase hope. The Scripture not only speaks of the patience of hope, but also declares that "patience works ex-

perience, and experience hope." When the war began, we doubted whether the nation was really patriotic enough to encounter its dangers and losses. But as it went on we found by experience the immense strength, tenacity, endurance, of the popular heart, and so experience worked hope, and by that hope we were saved.

Thus we see that true patience is not a weak and purely passive virtue, but springs out of manly purpose, noble aims, living convictions, and generous hopes. God is patient with us all, patient with our follies and sins, patient and long-suffering, because he looks forward to the end when all evil shall cease, all tears be wiped away, and man rise into the image of himself. We grow impatient at the slow progress of affairs, the evils of society, the obstinacy of vice, the misery and want and woe of the world. We cry, "How long, Lord! how long!" Christianity is like the leaven hidden in three measures of meal; we do not see it at work, and so we doubt its power. It is like the seed hidden in the ground; it springs and grows we know not how. We are impatient and discouraged. But with God one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. He has plenty of time, and can afford to wait. He does not hurry anything. He allows us to take our

own time in learning to do right. Meantime he sends his sun and his rain on the evil and on the good. He makes us all as happy as we are able to be. He sends fresh joy into the world in the hearts of little children, full of natural hope and glad interest in existence. He meets us with his forgiving love when we tire of our sin and long for redemption. He opens to us a heaven here, and another heaven hereafter, on condition only that we shall be willing to go into it by the open door of faith, love, and obedience. If we are not willing to go in, he waits till we are; till we have exhausted our selfishness, our wilfulness, our falsehood, and find them all bitter and miserable.

In your patience possess your souls! Patience is not giving up, or yielding; it is self-possession. Patience does not come from weakness, but from strength. It is the ripe fruit of a noble aim, a profound hope, a generous activity.

XIX.

LOVE.

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We often say that the essence of Christianity is love to God and love to man. Only love God with all your heart, and your neighbor as yourself, and you have the substance of the gospel. We say this as if it were something very easy to do, as though it made religion very simple and very practicable. It makes it simple, perhaps, but does it make it practicable? We know a little how we can love man; but do we find that very easy? Is it easy to be generous, unselfish, kind to the unthankful, loving to enemies? It is not easy to love man in any very high and large sense.

But how are we to love God? How love an unseen being, if he comes to us only through the laws of nature and providence; so far away, so high above us; an infinite being, and therefore infinitely remote from all our finite sympathies?

Jesus declared love to God and love to man to be the two great commandments on which hang all the Law and the Prophets. This shows that,

in his religion, love sums up everything. It is faith and obedience; it contains all religion and all morality; if we have this, we have all.

Moreover, this saying of Jesus shows that it is something for all to have, something that all should struggle for and possess, the one thing needful. We may dispense with everything else, but not with love. It is not for saints only, for particularly good people; it is for sinners too. We are not all expected to become eminent saints, any more than all stars are expected to be as bright as Sirius. There are degrees of glory in the heavenly world. But no one can have life in him who has not some love in him. Pure selfishness would be equivalent to annihilation; and the selfish man is going down to death all the time.

We see this in the case of human love. People can forgive everything else in a man but a hard heart; they can forgive everything for the sake of a kind heart. A man may cheat, lie, steal, and murder; but if he seems to be generous, if he will only perform some striking act of charity, men will consider that a sort of atonement for his sins. In novels, and on the stage, the villain is always a cold-blooded, hard-hearted fellow, and no one pities him when his fate overtakes him. But the careless,

reckless, impulsive sinner, who has some love for others left in his soul, is always saved at last, to the great satisfaction of the readers and the audience. All this is a great mistake; but it points toward a truth, — that one of the worst sins, in human estimation, is a perfectly selfish life.

Again, in the New Testament, love to man and to God are assumed to be identical. He who loves God aright must love man; he who has any true love for man must love God too. The Apostle Paul does not distinguish between the two kinds of love; he considers them the same. "Love," he says, "is the fulfilling of the law"; "Love suffereth long and is kind. Love vaunteth not itself." So the Apostle John speaks of love in general as of one quality, no matter in what direction exerted, — toward man in the form of humanity, toward God in the form of piety. "He who dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God." Jesus indicates the same identity in the essence of humanity and piety, when he says the first command is, Love God; and the second is like it, that is, of the same nature, the same kind of thing, — to love your neighbor.

But what is love? Much that passes for it does not deserve the name. In recent discussions about marriage and divorce it has been continually asserted

that the essence of marriage is love; that when a man and woman love each other, this is the essence of marriage, therefore it follows that if they cease to love each other their marriage is at an end. This is the fundamental idea of what is called "Free Love."

But it is important to remember that there are two utterly different and antagonist passions which are called love. One is of the earth, earthy; the other, heavenly. The distinction is, that one is selfish, the other generous. The one seeks its own, — its own gratification, its own pleasure. It wishes to be the object of sympathy and admiration. The other does not seek to receive, but to give; gives itself, and all it has. It does not seek its own. It seeks to bless, to benefit, to shed good on its object. The earthly love is seeking to draw all things to itself; it is never satisfied. The heavenly love, the only true love, goes out of itself, forgets itself, surrenders and sacrifices itself; and so never tires, and is undying and unchanging.

Love to God and love to man are the same principle acting in two directions. But each activity needs the other to keep it strong. The Apostle says, "If you do not love man, whom you see, how can you love the invisible God?" Most true! But it is also

true to say, "If you do not love God, who is infinite, perfect goodness, how can you love man, who is only finite and imperfect goodness?" To love man aright, you must love God in him, and find him the Divine child of heaven. To love God aright, you must learn to love him as you learn to love man, going out of yourself in sympathy, affection, and surrender of heart and soul.

How do children come to love their father and mother? Not, certainly, by being told it is their duty to love them, but because their father and mother love *them*. They find themselves surrounded by a perpetual presence of thought, care, affection; every want foreseen, every danger guarded against, every feeling sympathized with. The father and mother, if they are true parents, are the home, the shrine, the inmost, safest sanctuary of the child's heart. He runs in to them, and is safe. He has entire confidence in them; he tells them all his troubles. The little boy in the street, astonished by some unkindness from his companion, says, "I will tell my mother, if you do that." He is sure that motherly love will make everything right. Entire confidence, reliance, dependence, — that is the way in which love begins in the child's heart.

Now, this was made to be the emblem, the per-

petual illustration, of the beginnings of love to God. Piety naturally begins in this same way, in the sense of a universal presence, surrounding, guarding, providing for us. This is our Father's house, into which we have come. This land and sea and sky; this splendor of sun and beauty of moon and stars; this charm of springtime and summer; this museum of curiosities to be studied and wondered at; this gallery of pictures in nature; this education in work, joy, sorrow, health, sickness, pleasure, pain, — all this comes from the Heavenly Father and Mother of us all. And when anything goes wrong we can tell our Father about it, and all will be right.

Now, this is something which all can feel; this natural piety all can have, for these gifts are universal. "His sun shines and his rain falls on the evil and good, the grateful and the unthankful." When a child behaves badly, and has done wrong, he knows that he has grieved his father and mother, and will be punished for it; but it never occurs to him that they will turn him out of doors, or cease to care for him. He is still their child. So we, whatever we do, are still God's children. He does not turn us out of doors. His house is our home still. Our brothers and sisters may disown us and despise us, but the father and mother do not.

"With other influences, thou, O Nature,
Healest thy wandering and diseaséd child.
Thou pourest on him thy tender influences,
Thy sunny hues, fair forms, and breathing sweets,
Thy melodies of woods and winds and waters."

But when we say nature we mean God. God, in nature and providence, perpetually provides for all his children. He makes it easy for all, good and evil, to take this first step in love to him, which consists in a child's trust and reliance. This is the first step of love, — that of a child.

The next is the love which friends feel for each other. Why do I love my friend? Because I see in him something noble, true, good. I love my father and mother with a love of reliance; but I love my friend with a love of admiration. I find something in his soul which strengthens mine. He arouses within me my better nature. He calls out qualities which I did not know I had. He reveals me to myself. Out of the abundance of his life he feeds mine. Such was the noble friendship which Shakespeare describes in his sonnets as the "marriage of true minds"; as the love "which looks on tempests and is never shaken."

"Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove.

O no ! it is the ever-fixéd mark
Which looks on tempests and is never shaken !
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth 's unknown, although its height is taken.
Love 's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come ;
It alters not with our brief days and weeks,
But bears it out, even to the edge of doom.
If this be error, and on me be provéd,
I never writ, and no man ever lovéd."

Such was the love which Tennyson bore to his friend Hallam, and immortalized in his In Memoriam. Such was the love of Goethe for Schiller, which he also has painted in undying verse.

"For he was ours. And may that word of pride
Drown, with its lofty tone, pain's bitter cry.
With us, the fierce storm over, he could ride
At anchor, in safe harbor, quietly.
Yet onward did his mighty spirit stride
To beauty, goodness, truth, — eternally.
And far behind, in mists dissolved away,
That which confines us all, the common, lay.

Burned in his cheek, with ever-deepening fire,
The spirit's youth, which never passes by ;
The courage that, when worlds in hate conspire,
Conquers, at last, their dull hostility ;
The lofty faith, which, ever mounting higher,
Now presses on, now waiteth patiently ;
With which the good tends ever to his goal,
With which day meets, at last, each noble soul."

All that reveals to us grandeur, nobleness, purity, integrity, is a revelation of God. As we reverence these, we are really learning to love him. Thus every good man is a revelation of God to us, and helps us to love him better than before. We shall learn to love God by recognizing that all human goodness is from him. That is what Jesus meant when he refused to be called good. "Why callest thou *me* good? There is none good but one, that is, God." "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do." The goodness of Jesus is a revelation, and the greatest revelation ever made to man, of the goodness of God. That is the great glory of Christ, to be a revelation of his Father. That is the true view of his Divinity, that we look through him and see God. But if we do not also see something divine in the goodness around us, if we have no faith in human goodness here, then that of Jesus will grow unreal, and lose its power. As Jesus is the mediator of the goodness of God, so all good men and women are channels through which this goodness of Jesus flows into the world, and they all lift us to the sight of a divine beauty, holiness, and purity.

This is the second step in love, — to learn to love and adore true nobleness in all men. It is very bad

to doubt human virtue, because we then cut the electric chain which binds us all to God. If we find nothing to love in man whom we have seen, how can we find anything to love in God? We may say that God is good; but it will be a mere empty word till it has acquired meaning by our knowledge of human goodness. He therefore who has learned to question earthly virtue has also learned to deny the holiness of God. Cynicism is infidelity. But an undying faith in something really good in all men is a Jacob's ladder by which earth is connected with heaven.

The third step in love is that of man and wife; and this, both in Scripture and in all religious literature, has been made the type of the devotion of the soul to God.

The essence of the purest love is self-dedication, self-surrender, each living in the life of another person who is one's real self, and so *not* another person. It is the highest form of love, because the most generous. It "does not seek its own." "It beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." It finds its happiness in giving, not receiving. It is to be found, in essence, not merely in marriage, but out of it, wherever love is truly a communion of souls, and whenever two become really one.

But see by what a beautiful process this generous love is born in two young hearts. They are drawn to each other by some mysterious personal attraction, they know not how or why. Each is taken out of self by this powerful charm. Each is made, perhaps for the first time in life, truly glad in the gladness of another soul. Each finds joy in giving joy. It is not hard self-denial, but easy self-surrender. At first a blind attraction, it grows into a deliberate and rational choice. It becomes self-conscious, intelligent, conscientious, reasonable; and this without losing the original underlying charm. It is the easiest of all possible ways for educating man and woman out of selfishness into a noble self-surrender; out of a narrow individualism into a perfect oneness. Nor is it confined to technical marriage, for souls may be thus married in mutual self-dedication. Friends may thus live from and for each other. In fact, whenever any kind of love becomes wholly generous, it partakes of this higher quality. It is love that serves, love that gives, love that seeks not its own, love which is really love.

And so we learn to love God by giving ourselves to him, by serving him, by doing his will. Love to God is thus born of self-dedication. Having learned how to love man without selfishness, we can love God in the same way.

All the loves of this world, then, are meant to educate us to the love of God. We take the first step when we begin to love our father and mother; for so we learn that part of piety which is reliance on a higher power, a higher wisdom, and a higher goodness. We take the next step when we form friendships for those in whom we find good and great qualities; for so we learn the piety which is adoration and reverence. We take the third step when we love others for their sake rather than our own; being drawn out of ourselves toward husband or wife, toward our children, and toward all whom we can help. So we learn the piety which is self-devotion and union, — union of heart with heart, soul with soul, spirit with spirit.

All the loves of man are meant to be turned into love to God. All the love we have learned in this world is a preparation for a Divine love. It only needs to take a new direction to become Divine love. If one can love man, he can love God. If he can love God, he can love man.

The greatest scientific discovery of the present time is said to be that of the correlation and conservation of forces. It means that there is one force underlying all forces; now taking one form, now another. It is now motion, then heat, then electricity,

then magnetism, then chemical affinity. So in the spiritual world all forces of the soul are the same, and he who has one can have the rest. Therefore it is that in the New Testament faith is sometimes made the whole of religion, and sometimes hope is said to be the source of salvation, and sometimes we are told if we obey the Commandments we shall enter into life, and then we are taught that love is the fulfilling of the law. They are all one and the same. They take different forms according to the position of the soul. But he who has really one has all. If a man can really trust God, then he can obey him. If he can really obey, then he can believe; if he can love his brother as himself, he can love God. If he can love God, then he can love his brother.

But to lead a true life this central principle must act in all directions. It will not do to say, "Because I have faith I need not work; because I have piety I do not need morality; because I do my duties it is not necessary to be religious; because I love man I may dispense with the love of God." "Faith without works is dead, being alone." Work without faith as its root is a barren tree that produces little fruit. We must rise out of the love of man into the love of God; we must descend out of the love of God into the love of man. So all of our life becomes vital,

full, vigorous, progressive; we leave the dead past behind, and reach on to a better future.

So we may learn to love God by cherishing a more entire and childlike trust in his fatherly care, amid all the changes and chances of our life. We may rely on him as the best and nearest friend, who never will forsake us in time or eternity. From this trusting love we can ascend a step higher into the love which adores the Divine beauty in all of nature, through all of providence, in the goodness of all good men, and especially sees it imaged and reflected in the life of Jesus, the Son of God. And then we may make this love one of intimate union by devoting ourselves freely and entirely to God's service, by giving to him our heart, by making it our meat and drink to do his will, by that habit of prayer which consists in always asking and always receiving heavenly influence for daily work and daily life.

People sometimes say "To work is to pray." This is true, and it is not true. To work in the highest way is to pray; to pray in the highest way is to work. Jesus prayed when he was working, for he kept his soul open toward God to receive inspiration, while he stretched out his hand toward man to do good. Work that is full of heavenly inspiration is a mode of prayer, just as heat is a mode of motion.

But to go through a routine of outward duties mechanically is neither praying nor working. And prayer, to be true prayer, must be prayer looking at work for its end; prayer that says "Thy will be done on earth"; prayer that holds in its soft embrace all the human hearts we are to meet in our day's task and toil. To say one's prayers as a duty, to pray for a selfish good, to go through the routine of prayer as a priest reads his Breviary in the railroad-car, so many hours a day, — that is neither prayer nor work. Inspired prayer is work, inspired work is prayer; but routine prayer and routine work are neither one nor the other.

We must *grow* into the love of God as we grow into the love of man. And the two best methods of this growth are, first, to study the character of God as revealed in that of Jesus; secondly, to mediate that character to others by living in the same spirit. As we look at the life of Jesus we seem to draw near to his Father and our Father, to his God and to our God. God is no longer strange or far off, and we see why it is that the Church has called Jesus God. When we see the moon reflected in a perfectly still lake, we do not say, "There is a lake," but we say, "There is the moon." We become acquainted with God through the gospel, as in no

other way. In no other way, except in this one other way, — of personal communion and intercourse, by personal service. The best way of all is by living ourselves as Jesus did, from God, for man. Thus there grows up quietly and imperceptibly a sense of personal union with God, and we know what Jesus meant when he said "I and my Father are one."

XX.

THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN.

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In Paul's speech to the Athenians he said that "God hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth." That is perhaps one of the strongest texts of Scripture teaching human brotherhood, — teaching that all men are brethren. The brotherhood of man is eminently a Christian doctrine; even the idea is a Christian idea. Transient gleams of this light may have previously flashed across the human mind; as when the Roman poet Terence said, in one of his plays, "I am a man, and nothing which belongs to man is foreign to me," and the crowded theatre rose, as one man, in response to the great sentiment. Nevertheless, race, language, nationality, so separated men in antiquity, that they thought no more of the rights of a foreign people than we do of the rights of the wild beasts of the forests, or fish of the stream. There was an aged and respectable man in Massachusetts, who was formerly in the habit of going into the Adirondack woods, slaughtering the deer for their skins,

and throwing away the carcasses of the animals; until at last the very guides, sick of such reckless destruction, refused to go with him, and so drove him from the woods. But as this venerable man felt to the deer, so the backwoodsmen feel toward the Indians; so the slave-traders feel toward the Africans; so, before the coming of Christ, and long after his coming, the Jews felt to the Gentiles, the Greeks felt to the barbarians, the Romans felt to every race and nation which they trampled under their iron heel.

I take my rod and stroll out, of a lovely summer morning, and wade in the cool stream, and drag out one fish after another simply for my amusement. But when I come home I am troubled in my conscience, and I say, "These are my fellow-creatures! God, who made the world and all things therein, gave to these trout this cool rushing water in which to live; what right have you to rob them of their innocent lives, and butcher them, to make yourself a morning's holiday?" I think I probably feel more ashamed of killing the trout than the hundred thousand Romans felt, when, sitting in the Flavian amphitheatre, they rejoiced and shouted over the gladiators murdering each other for their pastime.

Here is a passage I met in Max Müller's Science

of Language. It has more weight because it comes not from a professed theologian, but from a man of science. Thus he speaks: "It was Christianity which first broke down the barriers between Jew and Gentile, between the Greek and barbarian, between the white and the black. *Humanity* is a word which you look for in vain in Plato or Aristotle, — the idea of mankind as one family, as the children of one God, is an idea of Christian growth; and the science of mankind and of the languages of mankind is a science which, without Christianity, would never have sprung into life. When people had been taught to look upon all men as brethren, then, and then only, did the variety of human speech present itself as a problem to be solved, — and I therefore date the real beginning of the science of language from the Day of Pentecost."

But what is human brotherhood? What do we mean by it?

Consider the love of brothers and sisters for each other. What is its nature and conditions? It is a very peculiar and beautiful feeling. Brothers and sisters may have very different tastes, different occupations, different enjoyments. Their opinions may differ, — one shall be orthodox, the other liberal, one is conservative and another radical. No mat-

ter, the sweet, strong tie of fraternal love runs below all this diversity, and holds them together. "My brother!" "My sister!" these are sacred words; they have a charm which outlasts many affections which seem for a time far more ardent. Other loves come and go; this remains. Our brothers and sisters belong to us, and always will. No caprice can touch this relation, no misunderstanding alter it, no jealousy torment it, no cold alienation freeze it. It is like the love on which death hath set its seal; no rivals can take it from us, no falsehood disallow it. In a world of change and decay, how satisfactory are these relations which rest on a foundation so solid and sure! The little children who played together before their father's door; who walked together to school, hand in hand; who confided to each other their youthful joys and pains; who have been near to help each other in the accidents of life; who have grown into men and women side by side, — they can have a confidence in each other, a mutual reliance, which scarcely any other relation may supply. I recollect three old men, brothers, each eminent in his own way, whom I used to see walking, arm in arm, around Boston Common. Every day they met and took their walk together. The snows of seventy years, which had whitened their hair, had not chilled

one throb of the love which they brought up from their childhood, when they clustered together in their mother's lap, slept together in the same little bed, played together around the same fireside. The learned judge, the wise and good physician, the energetic Massachusetts manufacturer, were brothers, and nothing else, every day for an hour, during their morning walk. Such is *natural* brotherhood. It rests on these three facts: that brothers have the same father and mother, that they will always be brothers and sisters, and that their interests are common. They have the same home, the same relatives, the reputation and honor of the family is equally dear to all.

But now there is another kind of brotherhood, — a spiritual brotherhood, of which the natural brotherhood is a type. The Jews called each other "brethren"; not merely as descended from Father Abraham, but as having the same faith and the same religious institutions. The Apostles said to the Jews, "Men and brethren, this scripture must be fulfilled"; "Men and brethren, let me freely speak to you of the patriarch David"; "Men, brethren, and fathers, hearken"; "Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, be this known unto you, and hear my words." Paul, defending

himself before the Jewish Sanhedrim, still called them "brethren." "Men and brethren, fathers, hear my defence!" "Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, son of a Pharisee." "Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience toward God to this day." Here is the natural brotherhood extended so as to include all of one nation and religion. This is the first widening out of the principle of brotherhood.

But immediately, as soon as Christianity came, there arrived a further extension. The sense of the brotherly relation was enlarged so as to take in the Gentiles also who believed in Jesus. One faith now made one brotherhood. Now Paul, writing to Christians in Rome, Corinth, Ephesus, Thessalonica, Asia Minor, calls them all brothers and sisters. In this cold world, where so much selfishness abounds, what a blessing to find brothers and sisters in every place where you may go! If Christianity had done only this, it would have been a great gift. Paul says, "Let us go again and visit *our brethren* in every city." Such is the divine power of a common faith.

The men who a year ago were strangers to Paul, who would have treated him with cold contempt and let him perish at their door unaided, now are *his* brothers and he theirs. He can visit no part of

the world and not find brethren. After his stormy voyage on the Mediterranean, he arrives, a weather-beaten traveller, in the Bay of Naples. He lands on an unknown shore at Puteoli, lonely amid the luxurious villas of the Roman Senators, which crowded the opposite coast of Baia. But, no! he is not alone. We read in the record, "We came the next day to Puteoli [now Pozzuoli], *where we found brethren,* and were desired to tarry with them seven days; and so we went to Rome. And from thence, when the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us as far as Appii Forum and the Three Taverns; whom when Paul saw he thanked God and took courage." Well might he do so! O happy power of a common faith, which gives us brothers and sisters wherever we go! O compensation for suffering, shipwreck, martyrdom, to find brotherly love awaiting one in strange lands, no longer strange! O gracious and blessed faith, which gives us brothers and sisters in every clime, and makes the world no longer a dreary, empty, selfish scene, but one happy family! I also, walking in the streets of Pozzuoli, felt my brotherhood to the Apostle Paul; and, going to the Appian Way, along which he went to Rome, pleased myself in thinking that my feet might stand where his had stood so many hundred years ago.

One night I wandered alone, without an acquaintance, in a Flemish city. I knew not a soul in the place, not one who even spoke my own language. But, passing through the great square, I saw a dim light on the cathedral windows, and went in. An earnest man was preaching to a little company in a side aisle of the mighty building. A few lamps showed the faces of the hearers amid the columns which rose in the darkness like the trees of a forest. I also went and sat among them, and heard the tones of faith, prayer, and love; and though I understood nothing, I felt it all, and was not alone. I was among brethren and sisters.

This was what Jesus meant, when, while he was talking to the people, one came interrupting him and saying, "Behold! thy mother and brethren stand without, desiring to speak to thee!" And Jesus said, "Who is my mother, and who are my brethren?" Then he looked on the disciples and the hearers, and said, "Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever *listens to God's truth, and obeys it,* is my mother and sister and brother!"

This is the true Church of Christ. It does not consist in altars, priests, ritual, ceremony, nor in profession, in creed, in doctrine. It consists in the sight of a common truth, which warms the heart and

gives us a new hope, peace, love. The Christian Church was not *founded*, it *came*, — came in this new spirit of brotherly love, shared by all who had the same sight of the Heavenly Father. "One is your Master," said Jesus, "and all ye are brethren."

Thus Christianity, at first, extended the Jewish sense of brotherhood, making it include all who believed in Jesus. Thus it created a new human affection. It added another sentiment to the human soul, it gave another pulse to the human heart. And more than this, when it said, "God is the Father of all, who loves all men, who will have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth, who loves all his children, Greeks and Gentiles, Jews and barbarians, the Hindoo in India, the negro tribes in Africa, the red Indian in America; when it proclaimed salvation for all, rescue from sin, a common immortality, a common heaven; when it sent out its missionaries to teach all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, — then it broke down ALL partition-walls, and established the brotherhood of man. Jesus himself led the way and gave the example when he went among publicans and sinners, when he talked with the Samaritan woman, and thus taught his disciples to call no man common or unclean.

Why, then, are we still so far from carrying out this doctrine? We talk of the brotherhood of man; but war exists, slavery exists, terrible distinctions of classes exist, even in the most Christian lands. More than that, — Christian churches do not yet recognize that they are brethren to all men. They deny the name of Christians to those who do not belong to their church, who do not believe in their creed, who do not worship in their way. They refuse to commune with those who have not been baptized by immersion; they excommunicate those who cannot pronounce their shibboleth. Until the Church believes in human brotherhood, we cannot expect the world to believe in it. While Christians think that God will cast off forever all the heathen, and also all Christians who are not Christians in their own way, it is clear that they have and can have no feeling of brotherhood toward any outside of their own little sect. If God has disinherited heretics, and does not regard them as his children, they, of course, cannot regard them as their brothers. This is the reason why war, slavery, inhumanity, still prevail so largely in the world; it is because bigotry and sectarianism prevail so largely in the Church. A true theology must precede a genuine humanity. A new heavens must make a new earth. "Yet once more I will shake

the earth and the heavens." There must be a heaven-quake, if there is to be an earthquake. That is why we wish to spread a broad and generous Christianity.

We have seen that the natural tie of brotherhood includes three elements. Brothers have the same father and mother who love them all impartially. They will remain always brothers and sisters. Therefore they have a common home, common interests, a common welfare. "If one suffers, all suffer; if one is happy, all are so."

No practical human brotherhood will prevail until we have the like convictions in respect to mankind. We shall not regard all men as our brethren until we believe that God is their Father, and that he loves them all equally. But we cannot believe that he loves them all equally while we believe that he means to save some of them because they have been born in America, and brought up as Christians, and that he will reject others because they were born in Africa or India, and were brought up as heathen. We cannot believe that he loves all as his children while we think that he means to make some everlastingly happy in heaven because, when infants, without any will of theirs, they were baptized into a particular church, and that he will condemn others to a perpetual exile from his presence, because their

parents did not put a little water on their foreheads when they were children. We cannot believe that God is the universal Father, if we think that he will punish men hereafter for involuntary ignorance or honest error.

It is for this reason that I prize and value a religion of common-sense. It makes it possible to love God and to love man. I know that men are better than their creeds, and that many who hold these narrow doctrines are full of humanity and universal benevolence. But, in the long run, our belief concerning God and man will affect our hearts and lives. If we think that heretics and heathen are not objects of God's saving love, that they are to be cast out forever from his heaven, that we and they are not to live together hereafter, but apart, that they have not the same interest in Christ that we have, that they are outside of the covenanted mercies of God, — then we may pity them and be sorry for them, but we cannot regard them with brotherly love, for they are not our brothers in any true sense.

I prize and value all broad and rational Christianity, because it teaches us that all men are God's children, and all dear to him; that he has made of one blood all men on the face of the earth, and

determined beforehand their habitation; that he will give them all, in this life and in the life to come, all the good they are capable of receiving; that he punishes no one, in this world or in any other world, out of wrath, or from cold justice, but only because they need it, and because it will do them good. It teaches that God sees more faith in honest doubt than in passive assent to any truth; that if we fall into error or sin ignorantly and unintentionally, he owes us, not punishment, but compensation. It teaches that in the other world Lazarus will probably go up and Dives go down; not because God loves Lazarus more than Dives, but because those who have had a hard time will be better for having an easy time, and those who have had an easy time will be better for having a hard time. Rational and liberal Christianity teaches that God intends all men to be saved some time, somewhere; that he means by an infinitely varied discipline, and by innumerable roads, to bring all together at last; that, however, he will never *compel* us to go to heaven, or make us happy till we are ready to make ourselves happy by doing right; that he will not spare pain, hardship, discipline, outer darkness, and sharp trial, in order to purify, elevate, and redeem us. It teaches that he intends to bring all mankind into his kingdom, into

one great brotherhood, in which Judas Iscariot and the Apostle Paul will shake hands; and God's will shall at last be done willingly, freely, and joyfully, by all his children.

This is what the religion of common-sense teaches, and this alone can make men regard each other as brethren. If we believe that every man is God's child, and dear to him; that God sees in him something good, something worth saving, and that he means to save him; that all are to make progress, and all to go up; and that we shall all be together in one heaven and one great kingdom of God, then we can really feel that all men are our brothers. This broad Christianity alone can make men feel and act as brethren.

It is for this I value it, and feel bound to urge it. I have many friends among the Orthodox denominations, and I like many things in their churches, — better, perhaps, than in my own. But every Orthodox creed teaches the everlasting damnation of a portion of the human race, — teaches that God has made and keeps up a great apparatus of torture, where men are to be tormented forever, without any hope or any end. It is impossible to believe in human brotherhood so long as this doctrine is maintained. Those whom God looks upon as so foul as

to be forever unfit for his society, we ought not to regard as fit for ours. Moreover, some Orthodox creeds teach that human salvation depends on holding certain opinions, and that those who even honestly reject them will be forever lost. No good father would condemn his child for an honest error of opinion; if God does so, he does not treat them as his children, and we ought not to treat them as brothers. I therefore feel bound to oppose such Orthodox systems until they renounce those dishonorable views of the character of God; for so long as they are maintained and taught, the brotherhood of man is impossible.

The Scriptures teach us that the time will come in which, every knee shall bow to Christ, and every tongue confess that he is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. I believe, with all my heart, that this is so. But that time is to come, not by any miracle, not by any special providence, but by the truth and love which are in Jesus, and by his gospel being seen and known. This will cause men to bow to him. Because he is the best, purest, and noblest of all beings, and because his truth is adapted to all our wants, all will bow to him. His authority is in the supreme beauty and perfection of his doctrine and his influence. But this must be shown to others by those who themselves are influenced by it. As Christ

reveals God to man by his life and words, so Christians, by their lives and words, must reveal Christ to their fellow-men. We must show that we believe in human brotherhood by sympathizing with all, despising none, seeking those who are in sorrow and need, and becoming to them mediators of the love of God in Christ. It is for this that the Church exists; to reveal Christ to men by doing Christ-like works, and going forth in his name to seek and to save those who are lost. Let Christians endeavor to do this work, and so prove that they really believe in the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.

The churches, if they do nothing else, keep alive this sense of the greatness of humanity. Elsewhere we meet classes of men, this or that kind of man; in the Church we met man. At school we meet scholars; at the polls we meet voters; at balls and parties we meet our own set; in shops and in Wall Street we meet business people. Everywhere else we find variety, separation, men divided into parties, clubs, societies, according to their tastes. But in the Church man meets man on the common ground of humanity. The fashionable people and those whose lives are cold, gray, plain, meet before God. Those who live for pleasure, and those who live to do good, the idler and the hard worker, the

public man and the man of privacy, the student and the man of action, gray hairs leaning toward the grave, childhood just leaving the cradle, — all meet together, on one level, before God. If I did not go to church for anything else, I should go for this. The sermon might be stupid, — then I should not listen to it. The prayers might not suit me, — then I should pass them by. The music might grate on my ear, — I should try not to hear it. But I should at least see human faces; I should meet humanity, — not rich men or poor men, not great men or little, but men. One would stand before me greater than the Temple, greater than its liturgy, its prayers, its priests, its ritual, — my brother man, bowed before my father, God. This would make to me the Church a home, whether it were Catholic or Protestant, Presbyterian, Quaker, or Methodist. I would not lose this great influence; for it tends to humanize our life and join us to our race, opposing the tendency to caste, to cliques, to all narrowness, by its broad inclusion.

THE END.

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